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P 1

THE WISDOM OF EDMUND BURKE

"If we do not take to our aid the foregone studies of men reputed intelligent and learned, we shall be always beginners." BURKE.

"In Mr. Burke's writings the germs of almost all political truths may be found." COLERIDGE.

THE WISDOM

OF

38068

EDMUND BURKE

EXTRACTS FROM

HIS SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

SELECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

EDWARD ALLOWAY PANKHURST

LONDON

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INTRODUCTION

In the following pages the design of the Editor has been to exhibit the *general principles*, political, social, and moral, of Edmund Burke. In making a selection from his writings he has sought for those passages which convey some general truth, some deep reflection on human affairs, or are inspired by some great and ennobling sentiment.

This little book has not been compiled therefore so much as a contribution to the politics of the day, as in the hope that it will prove of permanent interest

and value; that it will be helpful to all those who think on the ever-recurring questions connected with the beliefs, the conduct, and the government of men, to which no age is a stranger. Many passages remarkable only for their brilliant rhetoric or splendour of metaphor, and which are already well known, have been omitted from this collection. Others, that refer to political conditions which no longer exist, have no place in the present volume, as not being in keeping with its scope and character. Should the reader, however, be anxious to know Burke's opinions on the injustice of the Penal Laws against Roman Catholics then in force in Ireland, or on the political disabilities under which they suffered in 1786, they may be found more especially in his Letters "To Richard Burke, Esq.," "To a Peer of

Ireland," and "To Sir Hercules Langrishe." On the other hand, a forcible denunciation of the inordinate political claims put forward by some prominent Irishmen of his time, may be read in a letter to Dr. Hussey, generally printed only in the *Correspondence.*

The Editor is of course responsible for the headings of the paragraphs, and for the order in which they are arranged. His aim has been to bring into a focus under each subject, the scattered lights that are distributed through many volumes of speeches and pamphlets. Such is the wealth of thought and illustration, however, with which they are encumbered, that his difficulty has often been to stay his hand. It may indeed be said of them that they are "full of all wisdom."

It is hoped, however, that enough

has been here gathered to show to the countrymen of Edmund Burke, that he is not unworthy of the high praise accorded to him by Macaulay—that of being "the greatest man since Milton."

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THE

WISDOM OF EDMUND BURKE.

Trade and Commerce.

F honesty be true policy with regard to the transient interest of individuals, it is much more certainly so with regard to the permanent interests of communities. I know that it is but too natural for us to see our own *certain* ruin in the *possible* prosperity of other people. It is hard to persuade us that everything which is *got* by another is not *taken* from ourselves. But it is fit that we should get the better of these suggestions, which come from what is not the best and soundest part of

our nature, and that we should form to ourselves a way of thinking, more rational, more just, and more religious. Trade is not a limited thing; as if the objects of mutual demand and consumption could not stretch beyond the bounds of our jealousies. God has given the earth to the children of men, and he has undoubtedly, in giving it to them, given them what is abundantly sufficient for all their exigencies; not a scanty, but a most liberal, provision for them all. The author of our nature has written it strongly in that nature, and has promulgated the same law in his written word, that man shall eat his bread by his labour; and I am persuaded that no man, and no combination of men, for their own ideas of their particular profit, can, without great impiety, undertake to say, that he *shall not* do so; that they have no sort of right, either to prevent the labour or to withhold the bread.—*Letter to Gentlemen at Bristol.*

Agriculture.

Agriculture will not be increased until commercial principles be applied to it; or, in other words, until country gentlemen are convinced that the expenditure of a small part of capital upon land, is the true secret of securing a large capital by ensuring increased returns.—*Letter to a Correspondent.*

The Desire of Gain the great Cause of Prosperity.

The love of lucre, though sometimes carried to a ridiculous, sometimes to a vicious, excess, is the grand cause of prosperity to all states. In this natural, this reasonable, this powerful, this prolific principle, it is for the satirist to expose the ridiculous: it is for the moralist to censure the vicious; it is for the sympathetic heart to reprobate the hard and cruel; it is for the judge to animadvert on the fraud, the extortion, and the oppression; but it is for the statesman to employ it as

he finds it, with all its concomitant excellencies, with all its imperfections on its head. It is his part, in this case, as it is in all other cases, where he is to make use of the general energies of nature, to take them as he finds them.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Men look for Permanency in their Possessions.

The desire of acquisition is always a passion of long views. Confine a man to momentary possession, and you at once cut off that laudable avarice which every wise state has cherished as one of the first principles of its greatness. Allow a man but a temporary possession, lay it down as a maxim that he never can have any other, and you immediately and infallibly turn him to temporary enjoyments; and these enjoyments are never the pleasures of labour and free industry, whose quality it is to famish the present hours and squander all upon

prospect and futurity; they are, on the contrary, those of a thoughtless, loitering, and dissipated life.—*Tracts on Popery Laws.*

Wealth must be subordinate to Virtue and Honour.

If wealth is the obedient and laborious slave of virtue and of public honour, then wealth is in its place, and has its use: but if this order is changed, and honour is to be sacrificed to the conservation of riches, riches which have neither eyes nor hands, nor anything truly vital in them, cannot long survive the being of their vivifying powers, their legitimate masters, and their potent protectors. If we command our wealth, we shall be rich and free: if our wealth command us, we are poor indeed.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

In a Monarchy Wealth cannot rank first.

It is the natural operation of things where there exists a crown, a court, splendid

orders of knighthood, and a hereditary nobility;—where there exists a fixed, permanent, landed gentry, continued in greatness and opulence by the law of primogeniture, and by a protection given to family settlements;—where there exists a standing army and navy;—where there exists a church establishment, which bestows on learning and parts an interest combined with that of religion and the state; in a country where such things exist, wealth, new in its acquisition, and precarious in its duration, can never rank first, or even near the first; though wealth has its natural weight further than it is balanced and even preponderated amongst us as amongst other nations, by artificial institutions and opinions growing out of them.—*Thoughts on French Affairs.*

Our Commerce and Manufactures not independent of Manners.

If, as I suspect, modern letters owe more than they are always willing to own to

ancient manners, so do other interests which we value full as much as they are worth. Even commerce, and trade, and manufacture, the gods of our economical politicians, are themselves perhaps but creatures; are themselves but effects, which, as first causes, we choose to worship. They certainly grew under the same shade in which learning flourished. They too may decay with their natural protecting principles.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The true Sources of National Wealth.

The stock of materials, by which any nation is rendered flourishing and prosperous, are its industry; its knowledge, or skill; its morals; its execution of justice; its courage; and the national union in directing these powers to one point, and making them all centre in the public benefit. Other than these I do not know, and scarcely can conceive any means by which a community may flourish.—*Tracts on Popery Laws.*

Civilisation and its Causes.

We are but too apt to consider things in the state in which we find them, without sufficiently adverting to the causes by which they have been produced, and possibly may be upheld. Nothing is more certain than that our manners, our civilisation, and all the good things which are connected with manners and with civilisation, have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles; and were indeed the result of both combined; I mean the spirit of a gentleman and the spirit of religion.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Taxation.

Liberty inheres in some sensible object; and every nation has formed to itself some favourite point, which by way of eminence becomes the criterion of their happiness. It happened, you know, sir, that the great contests for freedom in this country were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question

of taxing. Most of the contests in the ancient commonwealths turned primarily on the right of election of magistrates; or on the balance among the several orders of the state. The question of money was not with them so immediate. But in England it was otherwise. On this point of taxes the ablest pens and most eloquent tongues have been exercised; the greatest spirits have acted and suffered.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

Here this extraordinary man, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, found himself in great straits. To please universally was the object of his life; but to tax and to please, no more than to love and to be wise, is not given to men.—*Speech on Amer. Taxation.*

Confiscation unjust and impolitic.

When men are encouraged to go into a certain mode of life by the existing laws, and protected in that mode as in a lawful occupation—when they have accommodated all their ideas and all their habits to it—when

the law had long made their adherence to its rules a ground of reputation, and their departure from them a ground of disgrace and even of penalty—I am sure it is unjust in legislature, by an arbitrary act, to offer a sudden violence to their minds and their feelings; forcibly to degrade them from their state and condition, and to stigmatise with shame and infamy that character and those customs which before had been made the measure of their happiness and honour. —*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Parsimony not Economy.

I ever held a scanty and penurious justice to partake of the nature of a wrong. I held it to be, in its consequences, the worst economy in the world. In saving money, I soon can count up all the good I do; but when, by a cold penury, I blast the abilities of a nation, and stunt the growth of its active energies, the ill I may do is beyond all calculation.

. . . . .

Expense, and great expense, may be an essential part in true economy. If parsimony were to be considered as one of the kinds of that virtue, there is, however, another and a higher economy. Economy is a distributive virtue, and consists not in saving, but in selection. Parsimony requires no providence, no sagacity, no powers of combination, no comparison, no judgment. Mere instinct, and that not an instinct of the noblest kind, may produce this false economy in perfection. The other economy has larger views. It demands a discriminating judgment and a firm, sagacious mind. It shuts one door to impudent importunity, only to open another, and a wider, to unpresuming merit.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

Marriage.

To enable and authorise any man to introduce citizens into the commonwealth, before a rational security can be given that he

may provide for them, and educate them as citizens ought to be provided for and educated, is totally incongruous with the whole order of society. Nay, it is fundamentally unjust; for a man that breeds a family without competent means of maintenance encumbers other men with his children, and disables them so far from maintaining their own. The improvident marriage of one man becomes a tax upon the orderly and regular marriage of all the rest.—*Speech on Repeal of Marriage Act.*

Toleration a Part of Christianity.

The honourable gentleman thinks, that the dissenters enjoy a large share of liberty under a connivance; and he thinks, that the establishing toleration by law is an attack upon Christianity.

The first of these is a contradiction in terms. Liberty under a connivance! Connivance is a relaxation from slavery, not a definition of liberty.

. . . . .

If the liberty enjoyed be a liberty not of toleration, but of connivance, the only question is whether establishing such by law is an attack upon Christianity. Toleration an attack upon Christianity! What then, are we come to this pass, to suppose that nothing can support Christianity but the principles of persecution? Is that, then, the idea of establishment? Is it then the idea of Christianity itself, that it ought to have establishments, that it ought to have laws against dissenters, but the breach of which laws is to be connived at? What a picture of toleration; what a picture of laws, of establishments; what a picture of religious and civil liberty! I am persuaded the honourable gentleman does not see it in this light.

. . . . .

The Christian religion itself arose without establishment, it arose even without toleration; and whilst its own principles were not tolerated, it conquered all the powers of

darkness, it conquered all the powers of the world. The moment it began to depart from these principles, it converted the establishment into tyranny; it subverted its foundations from that very hour. Zealous as I am for the principle of an establishment, so just an abhorrence do I conceive against whatever may shake it. I know nothing but the supposed necessity of persecution, that can make an establishment disgusting. I would have toleration a part of establishment, as a principle favourable to Christianity, and as a part of Christianity.—*Speech on Relief of Dissenters.*

The Law.

He was bred to the law, which is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of upon Sciences; a science which does more

The first c invigorate the understanding terms. Liberty her kinds of learning put tonivance is a re not apt, except in persons definition of li open and to liberalise

the mind exactly in the same proportion.—*Speech on Amer. Taxation.*

And first of all, the science of jurisprudence, the pride of the human intellect, which, with all its defects, redundancies, and errors, is the collected reason of ages, combining the principles of original justice with the infinite variety of human concerns.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

In reality there are two, and only two, foundations of law; and they are both of them conditions without which nothing can give it any force; I mean equity and utility. With respect to the former, it grows out of the great rule of equality, which is grounded upon our common nature, and which Philo, with propriety and beauty, calls the Mother of Justice. All human laws are, properly speaking, only declaratory; they may alter the mode and application, but have no power over the substance of original justice. The other foundation of law, which is utility,

must be understood, not of partial or limited, but of general and public utility, connected in the same manner with, and derived directly from, our rational nature; for any other utility may be the utility of a robber, but cannot be that of a citizen; the interest of the domestic enemy, and not that of a member of the commonwealth.—*Tracts on Popery Laws.*

Lawyers.

Lawyers were birds of a different feather, and only perched in that house in their flight to another—only resting their pinions there for a while, yet ever fluttering to be gone to the region of coronets.—*Speech in House.*

The Army.

He knew too well, and he felt as much as any man, how difficult it was to accommodate a standing army to a free constitution, or to any constitution. An armed, disciplined body is, in its essence, dangerous to liberty; undisciplined, it is ruinous to society.—*Speech on Army Estimates.*

The fortitude required of officers is very different from the unthinking alacrity of the common soldier, or common sailor, in the face of danger and death; it is not a passion, it is not an impulse, it is not a sentiment; it is a cool, steady, deliberate principle, always present, always equable; having no connection with anger; tempering honour with prudence; incited, invigorated, and sustained by a generous love of fame; informed, moderated, and directed by an enlarged knowledge of its own great public ends; flowing in one blended stream from the opposite sources of the heart and the head; carrying in itself its own commission, and proving its title to every other command by the first and most difficult command, that of the bosom in which it resides: it is a fortitude which unites with the courage of the field the more exalted and refined courage of the council; which knows as well to retreat as to advance; which can conquer as well by delay as by the rapidity of a march,

or the impetuosity of an attack; which can be, with Fabius, the black cloud that lowers on the tops of the mountains, or with Scipio, the thunderbolt of war; which, undismayed by false shame, can patiently endure the severest trial that a gallant spirit can undergo, in the taunts and provocations of the enemy, the suspicions, the cold respect, and "mouth-honour" of those from whom it should meet a cheerful obedience; which, undisturbed by false humanity, can calmly assume that most awful moral responsibility of deciding when victory may be too dearly purchased by the loss of a single life, and when the safety and glory of their country may demand the certain sacrifice of thousands.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Power of the Press.

The writers of these papers, indeed, for the greater part, are either unknown or in contempt, but they are like a battery in which the stroke of any one ball produces

no great effect, but the amount of continual repetition is decisive. Let us only suffer any person to tell us his story, morning and evening, but for one twelvemonth, and he will become our master.—*Thoughts on French Affairs.*

The press in reality has made every government, in its spirit, almost democratic. —*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

ON THE MOTIVES WHICH ACTUATE PUBLIC MEN.

I hope there are none of you corrupted with the doctrine taught by wicked men for the worst purposes, and received by the malignant credulity of envy and ignorance, which is, that the men who act upon the public stage are all alike ; all equally corrupt ; all influenced by no other views than the sordid lure of salary and pension. The thing I know by experience to be false Never expecting to find perfection in men, and not looking for divine attributes in

created beings, in my commerce with my contemporaries, I have found much human virtue. I have seen not a little public spirit; a real subordination of interest to duty; and a decent and regulated sensibility to honest fame and reputation.

. . . . .

A conscientious person would rather doubt his own judgment than condemn his species. He would say, I have observed without attention, or judged upon erroneous maxims; I trusted to profession when I ought to have attended to conduct. Such a man will grow wise, not malignant, by his acquaintance with the world. But he that accuses all mankind of corruption ought to remember that he is sure to convict only one.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

Dissolution of Parliament the Prerogative of the Crown.

It is the undoubted prerogative of the Crown to dissolve Parliament; but we beg

leave to lay before His Majesty that it is, of all the trusts vested in His Majesty, the most critical and delicate, and that in which this House has the most reason to require not only the good faith but the favour of the Crown.—*Motion Rel. to Speech from Throne.*

On the Remuneration of the Ministers and Officers of the State.

I will even go so far as to affirm, that if men were willing to serve in such situations without salary, they ought not to be permitted to do it. Ordinary service must be secured by the motives to ordinary integrity. I do not hesitate to say that that state which lays its foundation in rare and heroic virtues will be sure to have its superstructure in the basest profligacy and corruption. An honourable and fair profit is the best security against avarice and rapacity; as in all things else, a lawful and regulated enjoyment is the best security against debauchery and excess. For

as wealth is power, so all power will infallibly draw wealth to itself by some means or other; and when men are left no way of ascertaining their profits but by their means of obtaining them, those means will be increased to infinity. This is true in all the parts of administration, as well as in the whole.—*Speech on Econom. Reform.*

Public Debts.

Nations are wading deeper and deeper into an ocean of boundless debt. Public debts, which at first were a security to governments, by interesting many in the public tranquillity, are likely in their excess to become the means of their subversion.—*Speech on Ref. of Representation.*

Political Pensions.

I would therefore leave to the Crown the possibility of conferring some favours which, whilst they are received as a reward, do not operate as corruption. When men receive

obligations from the Crown through the pious hands of fathers, or of connections as venerable as the paternal, the dependencies which arise from thence are the obligations of gratitude, and not the fetters of servility. Such ties originate in virtue, and they promote it. They continue men in those habitudes of friendship, those political connections, and those political principles in which they began life. They are antidotes against a corrupt levity, instead of causes of it. What an unseemly spectacle would it afford, what a disgrace would it be to the commonwealth that suffered such things, to see the hopeful son of a meritorious minister begging his bread at the door of that treasury from whence his father dispensed the economy of an empire, and promoted the happiness and glory of his country!—*Speech on Econom. Reform.*

WAR.

A conscientious man would be cautious how he dealt in blood. He would feel some

apprehension at being called to a tremendous account for engaging in so deep a play without any sort of knowledge of the game. It is no excuse for presumptuous ignorance that it is directed by insolent passion. The poorest being that crawls on earth, contending to save itself from injustice and oppression, is an object respectable in the eyes of God and man. But I cannot conceive any existence under heaven (which, in the depths of its wisdom, tolerates all sorts of things) that is more truly odious and disgusting than an impotent, helpless creature, without civil wisdom or military skill, without a consciousness of any other qualification for power but his servility to it, bloated with pride and arrogance, calling for battles which he is not to fight, contending for a violent dominion which he can never exercise, and satisfied to be himself mean and miserable in order to render others contemptible and wretched.

If you and I find our talents not of the great and ruling kind, our conduct, at least,

is conformable to our faculties. No man's life pays the forfeit of our rashness. No desolate widow weeps tears of blood over our ignorance. Scrupulous and sober in a well-grounded distrust of ourselves, we would keep in the port of peace and security; and perhaps in recommending to others something of the same diffidence, we should show ourselves more charitable to their welfare than injurious to their abilities.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

As if war was a matter of experiment! As if you could take it up or lay it down as an idle frolic! As if the dire goddess that presides over it, with her murderous spear in hand and her gorgon at her breast, was a coquette to be flirted with! We ought with reverence to approach that tremendous divinity that loves courage but commands counsel. War never leaves where it found a nation. It is never to be entered into without mature deliberation; not a delibera-

tion lengthened out into a perplexing indecision, but a deliberation leading to a sure and fixed judgment. When so taken up, it is not to be abandoned without reason as valid, as fully, and as extensively considered. Peace may be made as unadvisedly as war. Nothing is so rash as fear; and the councils of pusillanimity very rarely put off, whilst they are always sure to aggravate, the evils from which they would fly.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man. It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for our kind. The rest is vanity; the rest is crime.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

As to war, if it be the means of wrong and violence, it is the sole means of justice amongst nations. Nothing can banish it from the world. They who say otherwise,

intending to impose upon us, do not impose upon themselves. But it is one of the greatest objects of human wisdom to mitigate those evils which we are unable to remove.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

As we ought never to go to war for a profitable wrong, so we ought never to go to war for an unprofitable right.—*Speech in House.*

PEACE HAS ITS DANGERS AS WELL AS WAR.

In the ordinary course of human affairs any check to population among men in ease and opulence is less to be apprehended from what they may suffer than from what they enjoy. Peace is more likely to be injurious to them in that respect than war. The excesses of delicacy, repose, and satiety, are as unfavourable as the extremes of hardship, toil, and want, to the increase and multiplication of our kind. Indeed the abuse of the bounties of nature, much more surely than any partial

privation of them, tends to intercept that precious boon of a second and dearer life in our progeny, which was bestowed in the first great command to man from the All-gracious Giver of all, whose name be blessed, whether He gives or takes away. His hand, in every page of His book, has written the lesson of moderation. Our physical wellbeing, our moral worth, our social happiness, our political tranquillity, all depend on that control of all our appetites and passions which the ancients designed by the cardinal virtue of *Temperance.—Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

The Colonies.

My hold of the colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government,—they will cling and grapple

to you; and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood that your government may be one thing and their privileges another, that these two things may exist without any mutual relation,—the cement is gone; the cohesion is loosened; and everything hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply the more friends you will have; the more ardently they love liberty the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they

can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly. This is the true act of navigation which binds to you the commerce of the colonies, and through them secures to you the wealth of the world.

. . . . .

Do not dream that your letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses, are the things that hold together the great contexture of this mysterious whole. These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools as they are, it is the spirit of the English communion that gives all their life and efficacy to them. It is the spirit of the English constitution which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

We view the establishment of the English

colonies on principles of liberty, as that which is to render this kingdom venerable to future ages. In comparison of this, we regard all the victories and conquests of our warlike ancestors, or of our own time, as barbarous, vulgar distinctions, in which many nations whom we look upon with little respect or value have equalled, if not far exceeded us. This is the peculiar and appropriated glory of England. Those who *have and who hold* to that foundation of common liberty, whether on this or on your side of the ocean, we consider as the true, and the only true Englishmen. Those who depart from it, whether there or here, are attainted, corrupted in blood, and wholly fallen from their original rank and value. They are the real rebels to the fair constitution and just supremacy of England.—*Add. to Brit. Col. in N. America.*

My idea, therefore, without considering whether we yield as matter of right or grant as matter of favour, is *to admit the people of*

our colonies into an interest in the constitution. —*Speech on Concil. with America.*

The Great Bond between Peoples.

Nothing is so strong a tie of amity between nation and nation as correspondence in laws, customs, manners, and habits of life. They have more than the force of treaties in themselves. They are obligations written in the heart. They approximate men to men without their knowledge, and sometimes against their intentions. The secret, unseen, but irrefragable bond of habitual intercourse holds them together even when their perverse and litigious nature sets them to equivocate, scuffle, and fight about the terms of their written obligations.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

The Danger to Great Britain of Inordinate Power.

I dread our being too much dreaded. It is ridiculous to say we are not men; and

that, as men, we shall never wish to aggrandise ourselves in some way or other. Can we say, that even at this very hour we are not invidiously aggrandised? We are already in possession of almost all the commerce of the world. Our empire in India is an awful thing. If we should come to be in a condition not only to have all this ascendant in commerce, but to be absolutely able, without the least control, to hold the commerce of all other nations totally dependent upon our good pleasure, we may say that we shall not abuse this astonishing, and hitherto unheard-of power. But every other nation will think we shall abuse it. It is impossible but that, sooner or later, this state of things must produce a combination against us which may end in our ruin.—*Remarks on Policy of Allies.*

The British Empire should be considered as a Whole.

I think I can trace all the calamities of

this country to the single source of our not having had steadily before our eyes a general, comprehensive, well-connected, and well-proportioned view of the whole of our dominions, and a just sense of their true bearings and relations.

. . . . .

If we make ourselves too little for the sphere of our duty; if, on the contrary, we do not stretch and expand our minds to the compass of their object; be well assured that everything about us will dwindle by degrees, until at length our concerns are shrunk to the dimensions of our minds. It is not a predilection to mean, sordid, home-bred cares, that will avert the consequences of a false estimation of our interest, or prevent the shameful dilapidation into which a great empire must fall by mean reparations upon mighty ruins.—*Speech on Nab. of Arcot's Debts.*

Great Empire and Little Minds go ill together.

Do you imagine then that it is the land tax act which raises your revenue? that it is the annual vote in the committee of supply which gives you your army? or that it is the mutiny bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline? No! surely no! It is the love of the people; it is their attachment to their government, from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution, which gives you your army and your navy, and infuses into both that liberal obedience without which your army would be a base rabble and your navy nothing but rotten timber.

All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians who have no place among us; a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material; and who therefore, far

from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence, are in truth everything and all in all. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

In truth, the tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species. There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands. Virtue is not their habit. They are out of themselves in any course of conduct recommended only by conscience and glory. A large, liberal, and prospective view of the interests of states passes with them for romance; and the principles that recommend it, for the wanderings of a disordered imagination. The calculators compute

them out of their senses. The jesters and buffoons shame them out of everything grand and elevated. Littleness in object and in means, to them appears soundness and sobriety. They think there is nothing worth pursuit but that which they can handle; which they can measure with a two-foot rule; which they can tell upon ten fingers.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

THE LAWS WHICH GOVERN THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONS NOT YET UNDERSTOOD.

I am not of opinion that the race of men, and the commonwealths they create, like the bodies of individuals, grow effete and languid and bloodless, and ossify by the necessities of their own conformation, and the fatal operation of longevity and time. These analogies between bodies natural and politic, though they may sometimes illustrate arguments, furnish no argument of themselves. They are but too often used under the colour

of a specious philosophy, to find apologies for the despair of laziness and pusillanimity, and to excuse the want of all manly efforts when the exigencies of our country call for them more loudly.—*Letter to W. Eliot.*

But commonwealths are not physical but moral essences. They are artificial combinations, and, in their proximate efficient cause, the arbitrary productions of the human mind. We are not yet acquainted with the laws which necessarily influence the stability of that kind of work made by that kind of agent. There is not in the physical order (with which they do not appear to hold any assignable connection) a distinct cause by which any of those fabrics must necessarily grow, flourish, or decay; nor, in my opinion, does the moral world produce anything more determinate on that subject than what may serve as an amusement (liberal indeed, and ingenious, but still only an amusement) for speculative men. I doubt whether the his-

tory of mankind is yet complete enough, if ever it can be so, to furnish grounds for a sure theory on the internal causes which necessarily affect the fortune of a state. I am far from denying the operation of such causes: but they are infinitely uncertain and much more obscure, and much more difficult to trace, than the foreign causes that tend to raise, to depress, and sometimes to overwhelm a community.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

It is often impossible, in these political inquiries, to find any proportion between the apparent force of any moral causes we may assign and their known operation.

. . . . .

The death of a man at a critical juncture, his disgust, his retreat, his disgrace, have brought innumerable calamities on a whole nation. A common soldier, a child, a girl at the door of an inn, have changed the face of fortune, and almost of nature.

. . . . .

Nation is a moral essence, not a geographical arrangement, or a denomination of the nomenclator.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

What constitutes our Country?

Our country is not a thing of mere physical locality. It consists, in a great measure, in the ancient order into which we are born. We may have the same geographical situation, but another country; as we may have the same country in another soil. The place that determines our duty to our country is a social, civil relation.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

A Great State to be secure must be respected.

The rules and definitions of prudence can rarely be exact; never universal. I do not deny that, in small, truckling states, a timely compromise with power has often

been the means, and the only means, of drawling out their puny existence: but a great state is too much envied, too much dreaded, to find safety in humiliation. To be secure, it must be respected. Power, and eminence, and consideration, are things not to be begged. They must be commanded: and they who supplicate for mercy from others can never hope for justice through themselves. What justice they are to obtain, as the alms of an enemy, depends upon his character; and that they ought well to know before they implicitly confide.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

A Politic Act not the worse for being a Generous One.

These are deep questions where great names militate against each other; where reason is perplexed; and an appeal to authorities only thickens the confusion. For high and reverend authorities lift up their heads on both sides; and there is no sure

footing in the middle. This point is the *great Serbonian bog, betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old, where armies whole have sunk.* I do not intend to be overwhelmed in that bog, though in such respectable company. The question with me is, not whether you have a right to render your people miserable; but whether it is not your interest to make them happy. It is not what a lawyer tells me I *may* do; but what humanity, reason, and justice, tell me I ought to do.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

I was true to my old, standing, invariable principle, that all things which came from Great Britain should issue as a gift of her bounty and beneficence, rather than as claims recovered against a struggling litigant; or at least, that if your beneficence obtained no credit in your concessions, yet that they should appear the salutary provisions of your wisdom and foresight; not as things wrung from you with your blood by the cruel gripe

of a rigid necessity.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

Peace with Honour.

Great and acknowledged force is not impaired, either in effect or in opinion, by an unwillingness to exert itself. The superior power may offer peace with honour and with safety. Such an offer from such a power will be attributed to magnanimity. But the concessions of the weak are the concessions of fear.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

India.

The natives scarcely know what it is to see the gray head of an Englishman. Young men (boys almost) govern there, without society, and without sympathy with the native. They have no more social habits with the people than if they still resided in England; nor, indeed, any species of intercourse but that which is necessary to making a sudden fortune, with a view to a remote

settlement. Animated with all the avarice of age, and all the impetuosity of youth, they roll in one after another; wave after wave; and there is nothing before the eyes of the natives but an endless, hopeless prospect of new flights of birds of prey and passage, with appetites continually renewing for a food that is continually wasting.

. . . . .

But we are in general, sir, so little acquainted with Indian details; the instruments of oppression under which the people suffer are so hard to be understood; and even the very names of the sufferers are so uncouth and strange to our ears, that it is very difficult for our sympathy to fix upon these objects. . . . All these circumstances are not, I confess, very favourable to the idea of our attempting to govern India at all. But there we are: there we are placed by the Sovereign Disposer; and we must do the best we can in our situation. The situation of man is the preceptor of his duty.

. . . . .

All these things show the difficulty of the work we have on hand: but they show its necessity too. Our Indian government is in its best state a grievance. It is necessary that the correctives should be uncommonly vigorous; and the work of men sanguine, warm, and even impassioned in the cause. But it is an arduous thing to plead against abuses of a power which originates from your own country, and affects those whom we are used to consider as strangers.—*Speech on Mr. Fox's E. Ind. Bill.*

England and Ireland.

My poor opinion is, that the closest connection between Great Britain and Ireland is essential to the wellbeing, I had almost said, to the very being, of the two kingdoms. For that purpose I humbly conceive that the whole of the superior, and what I should call *imperial*, politics ought to have its residence here; and that Ireland, locally,

civilly, and commercially independent, ought politically to look up to Great Britain in all matters of peace or war; in all those points to be guided by her: and, in a word, with her to live and to die. At bottom Ireland has no other choice, I mean no other rational choice.

I think, indeed, that Great Britain would be ruined by the separation of Ireland; but as there are degrees even in ruin, it would fall the most heavily on Ireland. By such a separation Ireland would be the most completely undone country in the world; the most wretched, the most distracted, and, in the end, the most desolate part of the habitable globe. Little do many people in Ireland consider how much of its prosperity has been owing to, and still depends upon, its intimate connection with this kingdom.—*Letter on Affairs of Ireland.*

On the Rival Claims of Catholics and Protestants.

God has appointed your station and

mine. Let every man be as pious as he pleases; and in the way that he pleases; but it is agreeable neither to piety nor to policy to give exclusively all manner of civil privileges and advantages to a *negative* religion,—such is the Protestant without a certain creed; and at the same time to deny those privileges to men, whom we know to agree to an iota in every one *positive* doctrine, which all of us who profess the religion authoritatively taught in England hold ourselves, according to our faculties, bound to believe. The Catholics of Ireland (as I have said) have the whole of our *positive* religion; our difference is only a negation of certain tenets of theirs. If we strip ourselves of *that* part of Catholicism, we abjure Christianity.—*Letter on Affairs of Ireland.*

The Protestants of Ireland are not *alone* sufficiently the people to form a democracy; and they are *too numerous* to answer the ends and purposes of *an aristocracy.* Ad-

miration, that first source of obedience, can be only the claim or the imposture of a few. —*Letter to Sir H. Langrishe.*

Therefore my humble and decided opinion is, that all the three religions, prevalent more or less in various parts of these islands, ought all, in subordination to the legal establishments, as they stand in the several countries, to be all countenanced, protected, and cherished; and that in Ireland particularly the Roman Catholic religion should be upheld in high respect and veneration; and should be, in its place, provided with all the means of making it a blessing to the people who profess it; that it ought to be cherished as a good (though not as the most preferable good, if a choice was now to be made), and not tolerated as an inevitable evil.—*Letter to W. Smith.*

Position of the Catholic Clergy in Ireland.

As to the Irish Catholic clergy, their

condition is likewise most critical: if they endeavour by their influence to keep a dissatisfied laity in quiet, they are in danger of losing the little credit they possess, by being considered as the instruments of a government adverse to the civil interests of their flock. If they let things take their course, they will be represented as colluding with sedition, or at least tacitly encouraging it. If they remonstrate against persecution, they propagate rebellion. Whilst government publicly avows hostility to that people as a part of a regular system, there is no road they can take which does not lead to their ruin.—*Letter on Affairs of Ireland.*

The Lesson to be drawn from Irish History.

It cannot, I confess, be denied that those miserable performances, which go about under the names of Histories of Ireland, do indeed represent those events after this manner;

and they would persuade us, contrary to the known order of nature, that indulgence and moderation in governors is the natural incitement in subjects to rebel. But there is an interior History of Ireland, the genuine voice of its records and monuments, which speaks a very different language from these histories, from Temple and from Clarendon; these restore nature to its just rights, and policy to its proper order. For they even now show to those who have been at the pains to examine them, and they may show one day to all the world, that these rebellions were not produced by toleration, but by persecution; that they arose not from just and mild government, but from the most unparalleled oppression.

. . . . .

But, for my part, I think the real danger of every state is, to render its subjects justly discontented; nor is there in politics or science any more effectual secret for their security than to establish in their people a

firm opinion that no change can be for their advantage.—*Tracts on Popery Laws.*

Surely the state of Ireland ought for ever to teach parties moderation in their victories. People crushed by law have no hopes but from power. If laws are their enemies, they will be enemies to laws; and those who have much to hope and nothing to lose, will always be dangerous, more or less.—*Letter to C. J. Fox.*

Of Government—its Functions, Power, Weakness, and Limitations.

Government is not made in virtue of natural rights, which may and do exist in total independence of it; and exist in much greater clearness, and in a much greater degree of abstract perfection: but their abstract perfection is their practical defect. By having a right to everything they want everything. Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human *wants.* Men have a right that these wants

should be provided for by this wisdom. Among these wants is to be reckoned the want, out of civil society, of a sufficient restraint upon their passions. Society requires not only that the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body, as well as in the individuals, the inclinations of men should frequently be thwarted, their will controlled, and their passions brought into subjection. This can only be done *by a power out of themselves;* and not, in the exercise of its function, subject to that will and to those passions which it is its office to bridle and subdue. In this sense the restraints on men, as well as their liberties, are to be reckoned among their rights. But as the liberties and the restrictions vary with times and circumstances, and admit of infinite modifications, they cannot be settled upon any abstract rule; and nothing is so foolish as to discuss them upon that principle.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

I was persuaded that government was a practical thing, made for the happiness of mankind, and not to furnish out a spectacle of uniformity, to gratify the schemes of visionary politicians. Our business was to rule, not to wrangle; and it would have been a poor compensation that we had triumphed in a dispute, whilst we lost an empire.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

Let government protect and encourage industry, secure property, repress violence, and discountenance fraud, it is all that they have to do. In other respects, the less they meddle in these affairs the better; the rest is in the hands of our Master and theirs.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

To provide for us in our necessities is not in the power of government. It would be a vain presumption in statesmen to think they can do it. The people maintain them, and not they the people. It is in the power

of government to prevent much evil; it can do very little positive good in this, or perhaps in anything else.—*Thoughts on Scarcity.*

The leading vice of the French monarchy (which he had well studied) was in good intention ill-directed, and a restless desire of governing too much. The hand of authority was seen in everything, and in every place. All, therefore, that happened amiss in the course even of domestic affairs was attributed to the government; and, as it always happens in this kind of officious universal interference, what began in odious power ended always, I may say without an exception, in contemptible imbecility.—*Thoughts on Scarcity.*

The laws reach but a very little way. Constitute government how you please, infinitely the greater part of it must depend upon the exercise of the powers which are
large to the prudence and uprightness
sters of state.—*Thoughts on Scarcity.*

The object of the state is (as far as may be) the happiness of the whole. Whatever makes multitudes of men utterly miserable can never answer that object; indeed it contradicts it wholly and entirely; and the happiness or misery of mankind, estimated by their feelings and sentiments, and not by any theories of their rights, is, and ought to be, the standard for the conduct of legislators towards the people. This naturally and necessarily conducts us to the peculiar and characteristic situation of a people, and to a knowledge of their opinions, prejudices, habits, and all the circumstances that diversify and colour life. The first question a good statesman would ask himself, therefore, would be, how and in what circumstances do you find the society, and to act upon them.—*Speech on Pet. of Unitarians.*

It is the interest, and it is the duty, and because it is the interest and the duty, it i the right of government to attend much t

opinions; because, as opinions soon combine with passions, even when they do not produce them, they have much influence on actions. Factions are formed upon opinions; which factions become in effect bodies corporate in the state;—nay, factions generate opinions in order to become a centre of union, and to furnish watchwords to parties; and this may make it expedient for government to forbid things in themselves innocent and neutral.—*Speech on Pet. of Unitarians.*

Forms of Government.

He (Mr. Burke) has never professed him-
a friend or an enemy to republics or to
archies in the abstract. He thought
it the circumstances and habits of every
untry, which it is always perilous and pro-
ictive of the greatest calamities to force,
are to decide upon the form of its govern-
ment. There is nothing in his nature, his temper, or his faculties, which should make him an enemy to any republic modern or ancient.

. . . . .

The general character and situation of a people must determine what sort of government is fitted for them. That point nothing else can or ought to determine.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Bolingbroke has one observation which, in my opinion, is not without depth and solidity. He says that he prefers a monarchy to other governments; because you can better ingraft any description of republic on a monarchy than anything of monarchy upon the republican forms. I think him perfectly in the right. The fact is so historically; and it agrees well with the speculation.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

No Qualification for Government but Virtue and Wisdom.

There is no qualification for government but virtue and wisdom, actual or presumptive. Wherever they are actually found they have

in whatever state, condition, profession, or trade, the passport of heaven to human place and honour. Woe to the country which would madly and impiously reject the service of the talents and virtues, civil, military, or religious, that are given to grace and to serve it; and would condemn to obscurity everything formed to diffuse lustre and glory around a state. Woe to that country too, that, passing into the opposite extreme, considers a low education, a mean, contracted view of things, a sordid, mercenary occupation, as a preferable title to command.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

But no name, no power, no function, no artificial institution whatsoever, can make the men of whom any system of authority is composed any other than God, and nature, and education, and their habits of life have made them. Capacities beyond these the people have not to give. Virtue and wisdom may be the objects of their choice; but their

choice confers neither the one nor the other on those upon whom they lay their ordaining hands. They have not the engagement of nature, they have not the promise of revelation, for any such powers.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Relations between Government and the People.

I have nothing to do here with the abstract value of the voice of the people. But as long as reputation, the most precious possession of every individual, and as long as opinion, the great support of the state, depend entirely upon that voice, it can never be considered as a thing of little consequence either to individuals or to governments. Nations are not primarily ruled by laws; less by violence. . . . The laws reach but a very little way.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Nations are governed by the same methods, and on the same principles, by

which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or his superiors; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

No man carries further than I do the policy of making government pleasing to the people. But the widest range of this politic complaisance is confined within the limits of justice. I would not only consult the interest of the people, but I would cheerfully gratify their humours. We are all a sort of children that must be soothed and managed. I think I am not austere or formal in my nature. I would bear, I would even myself play my part, in any innocent buffooneries to divert them. But I never will act the tyrant for their amusement. If they will mix malice in their sports, I shall never consent to throw them any living, sentient creature whatsoever, no, not so much as a kitling, to torment.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

THE DELIBERATE SENSE OF THE NATION MUST IN THE END PREVAIL.

I most heartily wish that the deliberate ense of the kingdom on this great subject ould be known. When it is known, it *ust* be prevalent. It would be dreadful ideed if there was any power in the nation apable of resisting its unanimous desire, or ven the desire of any very great and decided ajority of the people. The people may be eceived in their choice of an object. But I an scarcely conceive any choice they can ake to be so very mischievous as the xistence of any human force capable of esisting it.—*Letter on Dur. of Parliaments.*

It is not consistent with equity or wisom to set at defiance the general feelings f great communities, and of all the orders hich compose them. Much power is tolerted, and passes unquestioned, where much yielded to opinion. All is disputed where

everything is enforced.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Sure I am that no precipitate resolution on a great change in the fundamental constitution of any country can ever be called the real sense of the people.—*Letter on Dur. of Parliaments.*

THE LOUD ASSERTIONS OF A FEW—NOT TO BE MISTAKEN FOR THE GENERAL OPINION OF A PEOPLE.

The vanity, restlessness, petulance, and spirit of intrigue, of several petty cabals, who attempt to hide their total want of consequences in bustle and noise, and puffing, and mutual quotation of each other, makes you imagine that our contemptuous neglect of their abilities is a general mark of acquiescence in their opinions. No such thing, I assure you. Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thou-

of great cattle, reposed beneath the
w of the British oak, chew the cud and
lent, pray do not imagine that those
nake the noise are the only inhabitants
e field; that of course they are many
nber; or that, after all, they are other
the little, shrivelled, meagre, hopping,
h loud and troublesome, insects of the
—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

ıction will make its cries resound through
ıtion as if the whole were in an uproar,
by far the majority, and much the
part, will seem for a while, as it were,
ilated by the quiet in which their virtue
noderation incline them to enjoy the
ngs of government. Besides that the
ɔn of the mere vulgar is a miserable
ven with regard to themselves, on account
ɜir violence and instability. So that if
vere to gratify them in their humour
/, that very gratification would be a
d of their dissatisfaction on the next.—
rhts on Pres. Discontents.

On the Interference of the State with the Discretion of Individuals.

It is one of the finest problems in legi lation, and what has often engaged n thoughts whilst I followed that professic "What the state ought to take upon itself direct by the public wisdom, and what ought to leave, with as little interference possible, to individual discretion." Nothir certainly, can be laid down on the subje that will not admit of exceptions, mai permanent, some occasional. But the clea est line of distinction which I could dra whilst I had my chalk to draw any line wi this; that the state ought to confine itself t what regards the state, or the creatures c the state, namely, the exterior establishmen of its religion; its magistracy; its revenue its military force by sea and land; th corporations that owe their existence to it fiat; in a word, to everything that is *truly and properly* public, to the public peace, t

the public safety, to the public order, to the public prosperity. In its preventive police it ought to be sparing of its efforts, and to employ means, rather few, infrequent, and strong, than many and frequent.

. . . . .

Statesmen who know themselves will, with the dignity which belongs to wisdom, proceed only in this the superior orb and first mover of their duty, steadily, vigilantly, severely, courageously: whatever remains will, in a manner, provide for itself. But as they descend from the state to a province, from a province to a parish, and from a parish to a private house, they go on accelerated in their fall. They *cannot* do the lower duty; and, in proportion as they try it, they will certainly fail in the higher. They ought to know the different departments of things; what belongs to laws, and what manners alone can regulate. To these, great politicians may give a leaning, but they cannot give a law.—*Thoughts on Scarcity.*

The True End of Legislature.

In effect, to follow, not to force, the public inclination; to give a direction, a form, a technical dress, and a specific sanction, to the general sense of the community, is the true end of legislature.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

I have ever abhorred, since the first dawn of my understanding to this its obscure twilight, all the operations of opinion, fancy, inclination, and will, in the affairs of government, where only a sovereign reason, paramount to all forms of legislation and administration, should dictate. Government is made for the very purpose of opposing that reason to will and caprice, in the reformers or in the reformed, in the governors or in the governed, in kings, in senates, or in people.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

It is the Part of Wisdom to tolerate some Evils.

It is no inconsiderable part of wisdom to

ow how much of an evil ought to be erated; lest, by attempting a degree of rity impracticable in degenerate times and nners, instead of cutting off the subsisting practices, new corruptions might be proced for the concealment and security of e old.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

It should stand as a fundamental maxim at no vulgar precaution ought to be employed in the cure of evils which are closely nnected with the cause of our prosperity. *Speech on Amer. Taxation.*

A PRUDENT POLICY SHOULD PRECEDE THE USE OF FORCE.

God forbid that on a worthy occasion thority should want the means of force, the disposition to use it. But where a udent and enlarged policy does not precede and attend it too, where the hearts of the tter sort of people do not go with the nds of the soldiery, you may call your

constitution what you will, in effect it will consist of three parts (orders, if you please), cavalry, infantry, and artillery — and of nothing else or better.—*Second Letter to Sir H. Langrishe.*

Force alone avails but little.

First, sir, permit me to observe, that the use of force alone is but *temporary.* It may subdue for a moment; but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again: and a nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

Popular Discontents too often arise from Misgovernment.

I am not one of those who think that the people are never in the wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say, that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon

a par in favour of the people. Experience may perhaps justify me in going further. When popular discontents have been very prevalent, it may well be affirmed and supported that there has been generally something found amiss in the constitution, or in the conduct of government. The people have no interest in disorder. When they do wrong, it is their error, and not their crime. But with the governing part of the state, it is far otherwise. They certainly may act ill by design, as well as by mistake. "*Les révolutions qui arrivent dans les grands états ne sont point un effect du hazard, ni du caprice des peuples. Rien ne révolte* les grands *d'un royaume comme* un gouvernement foible et dérangé. *Pour la* populace, *ce n'est jamais par envie d'attaquer qu'elle se soulève, mais par impatience de souffrir.*"—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Men of great presumption and little knowledge will hold a language which is

contradicted by the whole course of history. *General* rebellions and revolts of a whole people never were *encouraged*, now or at any time. They are always *provoked.—Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

The Disorders of the State never to be regarded as Incurable.

We are therefore never authorised to abandon our country to its fate, or to act or advise as if it had no resource. There is no reason to apprehend, because ordinary means threaten to fail, that no others can spring up. Whilst our heart is whole, it will find means or make them. The heart of the citizen is a perennial spring of energy to the state. Because the pulse seems to intermit, we must not presume that it will cease instantly to beat. The public must never be regarded as incurable.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Governments perish through their own Weakness.

Tyranny and cruelty may make men

justly wish the downfall of abused powers, but I believe that no government ever yet perished from any other direct cause than its own weakness.—*Thoughts on Scarcity.*

Circumstances determine the Value of all Political Schemes.

But I cannot stand forward and give praise or blame to anything which relates to human actions, and human concerns, on a simple view of the object, as it stands stripped of every relation, in all the nakedness and solitude of metaphysical abstraction. Circumstances (which with some gentlemen pass for nothing) give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

I never govern myself, no rational man ever did govern himself, by abstractions and

universals. I do not put abstract ideas wholly out of any question, because I well know that under that name I should dismiss principles; and that, without the guide and light of sound, well-understood principles, all reasonings in politics, as in everything else, would be only a confused jumble of particular facts and details, without the means of drawing out any sort of theoretical or practical conclusion. A statesman differs from a professor in a university; the latter has only the general view of society; the former, the statesman, has a number of circumstances to combine with those general ideas, and to take into his consideration. Circumstances are infinite; are infinitely combined; are variable and transient; he who does not take them into consideration is not erroneous, but stark mad—*dat operam ut cum ratione insaniat*—he is metaphysically mad. A statesman, never losing sight of principles, is to be guided by circumstances; and judging contrary to the exigencies of the moment he

ay ruin his country for ever.—*Speech on :t. of Unitarians.*

If I were as confident as I ought to be ffident in my own loose, general ideas, I :ver should venture to broach them, if but twenty leagues distance from the centre your affairs. I must see with my own 'es, I must, in a manner, touch with my /n hands, not only the fixed but the omentary circumstances, before I could nture to suggest any political project natsoever. I must know the power and sposition to accept, to execute, to persevere. must see all the aids and all the obstacles. must see the means of correcting the plan here correctives would be wanted. I must e the things; I must see the men. Without a concurrence and adaptation of these the design, the very best speculative ojects might become not only useless but ischievous.—*Letter to Member of Nat. :sembly.*

The Choice of the Right Moment.

What a sad thing it is that the grand instructor, Time, has not yet been able to teach the grand lesson of his own value; and that, in every question of moral and political prudence, it is the choice of the moment which renders the measure serviceable or useless, noxious or salutary.—*Second Letter to Sir H. Langrishe.*

At a distance, if we judge uncertainly of men, we must judge worse of *opportunities*, which continually vary their shapes and colours, and pass away like clouds. The Eastern politicians never do anything without the opinion of the astrologers on the *fortunate moment.* They are in the right if they can do no better; for the opinion of fortune is something towards commanding it. Statesmen of a more judicious prescience look for the fortunate moment too; but they seek it, not in the conjunctions and oppositions of planets, but in the conjunctions and

oppositions of men and things. These form their almanac.—*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

A PATIENT COMBATING WITH DIFFICULTIES CHARACTERISES WISE STATESMANSHIP.

Pater ipse colendi haud facilem esse viam voluit. He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to consider it in all its relations. It will not suffer us to be superficial. It is the want of nerves of understanding for such a task, it is the degenerate fondness for tricking short-cuts and little fallacious facilities, that has in so many parts of the world created governments with arbitrary powers. They have created the late arbitrary monarchy of France. They have created the arbitrary republic of Paris. With them defects in wisdom are to be supplied by the

plenitude of force. They get nothing by it. Commencing their labours on a principle of sloth, they have the common fortune of slothful men. The difficulties, which they rather had eluded than escaped, meet them again in their course; they multiply and thicken on them; they are involved, through a labyrinth of confused detail, in an industry without limit and without direction; and, in conclusion, the whole of their work becomes feeble, vicious, and insecure.

It is this inability to wrestle with difficulty which has obliged the arbitrary Assembly of France to commence their schemes of reform with abolition and total destruction. But is it in destroying and pulling down that skill is displayed? Your mob can do this as well at least as your assemblies. The shallowest understanding, the rudest hand, is more than equal to that task. Rage and frenzy will pull down more in half an hour, than prudence, deliberation, and foresight [illegible] up in a hundred years. The

errors and defects of old establishments are visible and palpable. It calls for little ability to point them out; and where absolute power is given, it requires but a word wholly to abolish the vice and the establishment together. The same lazy but restless disposition, which loves sloth and hates quiet, directs these politicians, when they come to work, for supplying the place of what they have destroyed. To make everything the reverse of what they have seen is quite as easy as to destroy. No difficulties occur in what has never been tried. Criticism is almost baffled in discovering the defects of what has not existed; and eager enthusiasm and cheating hope have all the wide field of imagination, in which they may expatiate with little or no opposition.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Odium which attaches to the Exertion of Authority.

Among other miserable remedies that

have been found in the *materia medica* of the old college, a change of ministry will be proposed; and probably will take place. They who go out can never long with zeal and good will support government in the hands of those they hate. In a situation of fatal dependence on popularity, and without one aid from the little remaining power of the Crown, it is not to be expected that they will take on them that odium which more or less attaches upon every exertion of strong power. The ministers of popularity will lose all their credit at a stroke if they pursue any of those means necessary to give life, vigour, and consistence to government. They will be considered as venal wretches, apostates, recreant to all their own principles, acts, and declarations. They cannot preserve their credit but by betraying that authority of which they are the guardians. — *Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Refined Policy the Parent of Confusion.

Refined policy ever has been the parent f confusion; and ever will be so as long s the world endures. Plain good intention, vhich is as easily discovered at the first iew as fraud is surely detected at last, is, et me say, of no mean force in the government of mankind. Genuine simplicity of neart is a healing and cementing principle. —*Speech on Concil. with America.*

True Policy based on Justice.

It is with the greatest difficulty that I am able to separate policy from justice. Justice is itself the great standing policy of civil society; and any eminent departure from it, under any circumstances, lies under the suspicion of being no policy at all.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

We must have Leaders.

In a mass we cannot be left to ourselves.

We must have leaders. If none will underta
to lead us right, we shall find guides who w
contrive to conduct us to shame and ruin.

. . . . .

But when the leaders choose to ma
themselves bidders at an auction of pop
larity, their talents, in the construction
the state, will be of no service. Th
will become flatterers instead of legislato
the instruments, not the guides, of the peo
If any of them should happen to propos
scheme of liberty, soberly limited and defi
with proper qualifications, he will be i
mediately outbid by his competitors, w
will produce something more splendi
popular. Suspicions will be raised of
fidelity to his cause. Moderation will
stigmatised as the virtue of cowards; a
compromise as the prudence of traito
until, in hopes of preserving the credit wh
may enable him to temper, and modera
on some occasions, the popular leader
obliged to become active in propagati

octrines, and establishing powers, that will fterwards defeat any sober purpose at which .e ultimately might have aimed.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Is it that the people are changed, that he commonwealth cannot be protected by ts laws? I hardly think it. On the contrary, I conceive that these things happen ecause men are not changed, but remain lways what they always were; they remain 'hat the bulk of us ever must be, when bandoned to our vulgar propensities, without uide, leader, or control; that is, made to e full of a blind elevation in prosperity; ɔ despise untried dangers; to be overɔwered with unexpected reverses; to find ıo clue in a labyrinth of difficulties, to get ɔut of a present inconvenience with any isk of future ruin; to follow and to bow o fortune; to admire successful though icked enterprise, and to imitate what we dmire.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Of Great Men.

Great men are the guideposts and landmarks in the state.—*Speech on Amer. Taxation.*

The great must submit to the dominion of prudence and of virtue; or none will long submit to the dominion of the great.

"*Dîs te minorem quod geris imperas.*"

This is the feudal tenure which they cannot alter.—*Letter to W. Eliot.*

The Statesman.

A disposition to preserve and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman. Everything else is vulgar in the conception, perilous in the execution.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Statesmen are placed on an eminence that they may have a larger horizon than we can possibly command. They have a

'hole before them, which we can contemplate nly in the parts, and often without the ecessary relations. Ministers are not only ur natural rulers, but our natural guides.—*'irst Letter on Reg. Peace.*

The temper of the people amongst whom e presides ought therefore to be the first :udy of a statesman. And the knowledge f this temper it is by no means impossible or him to attain, if he has not an interest ı being ignorant of what it is his duty to earn.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Steady, independent minds, when they have an object of so serious a concern to mankind as government under their contemplation, will disdain to assume the part of satirists and declaimers. They will judge of human institutions as they do of human characters. They will sort out the good from the evil, which is mixed in mortal nstitutions as it is in mortal men.—*Reflect. n Rev. in France.*

Somewhat a worse Reasoner for having been a Minister.

A man is generally rendered somewhat a worse reasoner for having been a minister. In private, the assent of listening and obsequious friends; in public, the venal cry and prepared vote of a passive senate; confirm him in habits of begging the question with impunity, and asserting without thinking himself obliged to prove.—*Obser. on Pres. State of Nation.*

The Views and Objects of a Politician to be considered as well as his Proposals.

In every political proposal we must not leave out of the question the political views and object of the proposer; and these we discover, not by what he says, but by the principles he lays down.—*Speech on Ref. of Representation.*

No man can say how far he will go who joins with those who are avowedly going to

the utmost extremities.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Doctrines limited in their present application, and wide in their general principles, are never meant to be confined to what they at first pretend.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

DESCRIPTION OF LORD CHATHAM'S MINISTRY.

He made an administration so checkered and speckled; he put together a piece of joinery so crossly indented and whimsically dovetailed; a cabinet so variously inlaid; such a piece of diversified mosaic; such a tesselated pavement without cement; here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers, king's friends and republicans; whigs and tories; treacherous friends and open enemies; that it was indeed a very curious show; but utterly unsafe to touch and unsure to stand on.—*Speech on Amer. Taxation.*

Not Men but Measures.

It is an advantage to all narrow wisdom and narrow morals that their maxims have a plausible air; and, on a cursory view, appear equal to first principles. They are light and portable. They are as current as copper coin, and about as valuable. They serve equally the first capacities and the lowest; and they are, at least, as useful to the worst men as to the best. Of this stamp is the cant of *Not men but measures;* a sort of charm by which many people get loose from every honourable engagement. When I see a man acting this desultory and disconnected part, with as much detriment to his own fortune as prejudice to the cause of any party, I am not persuaded that he is right; but I am ready to believe he is in earnest. I respect virtue in all its situations; even when it is found in the unsuitable company weakness.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

THE PARTY SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

Party divisions, whether on the whole ›perating for good or evil, are things in- eparable from free government. This is . truth which, I believe, admits little dispute, ıaving been established by the uniform ex- ›erience of all ages. The part a good citizen ›ught to take in these divisions has been a natter of much deeper controversy. But ɔod forbid that any controversy relating to ›ur essential morals should admit of no de- ision. It appears to me that this question, ike most of the others which regard our luties in life, is to be determined by our tation in it. Private men may be wholly ıeutral and entirely innocent; but they who re legally invested with public trust, or stand ›n the high ground of rank and dignity, /hich is trust implied, can hardly in any ase remain indifferent without the certainty f sinking into insignificance; and thereby ı effect deserting that post in which, with

the fullest authority and for the wisest purposes, the laws and institutions of their country have fixed them. However, if it be the office of those who are thus circumstanced to take a decided part, it is no less their duty that it should be a sober one. It ought to be circumscribed by the same laws of decorum, and balanced by the same temper, which bound and regulate all the virtues. In a word, we ought to act in party with all the moderation which does not absolutely enervate that vigour, and quench that fervency of spirit, without which the best wishes for the public good must evaporate in empty speculation.—*Obser. on Pres. State of Nation.*

Men thinking freely will, in particular instances, think differently. But still, as the greater part of the measures which arise in the course of public business are related to, or dependent on, some great, *leading, general principles in government*, a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his

political company if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Every profession, not excepting the glorious one of a soldier or the sacred one of a priest, is liable to its own particular vices; which, however, form no argument against those ways of life; nor are the vices themselves inevitable to every individual in those professions. Of such a nature are connections in politics; essentially necessary for the full performance of our public duty, accidentally liable to degenerate into faction. Commonwealths are made of families, free commonwealths of parties also; and we may as well affirm that our natural regards and

ties of blood tend inevitably to make me bad citizens, as that the bonds of our part weaken those by which we are held to ou country.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

They believed that no men could act wit effect who did not act in concert; that n men could act in concert who did not ac with confidence; that no men could act wit confidence who were not bound together b common opinions, common affections, an common interests.—*Thoughts on Pres. Di contents.*

In order to throw an odium on politica connection, these politicians suppose it a necessary incident to it, that you are blindl to follow the opinions of your party when in direct opposition to your own clear ideas; a degree of servitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of submitting to.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

ıDERS OF PARTIES OFTEN LED BY GO-BETWEENS AND OUTSIDERS.

As to leaders in parties, nothing is more nmon than to see them blindly led. The rld is governed by go-betweens.

. . . . .

There is in all parties, between the prin- ›al leaders in Parliament and the lowest lowers out of doors, a middle sort of men ; sort of equestrian order who, by the spirit that middle situation, are the fittest for ɜventing things from running to excess. ıt indecision, though a vice of a totally ferent character, is the natural accomplice violence. The irresolution and timidity those who compose this middle order ɜn prevent the effect of their controlling ıation. The fear of differing with the hority of leaders on the one hand, and contradicting the desires of the multitude the other, induces them to give a careless passive assent to measures in which they

never were consulted: and thus things proceed by a sort of activity of inertness until whole bodies, leaders, middle men, and followers, are all hurried, with every appearance and with many of the effects of unanimity, into schemes of politics in the substance of which no two of them were ever fully agreed, and the origin and authors of which, in this circular mode of communication, none of them find it possible to trace.

. . . . .

The sober part give their sanction at first through inattention and levity, at last they give it through necessity.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Origin and Functions of the House of Commons.

The House of Commons was supposed originally to be *no part of the standing government of this country.* It was considered as a *control* issuing *immediately* from the people, and speedily to be resolved into the mass from whence it arose. In this respect

was in the higher part of government what ıries are in the lower. The capacity of a ıagistrate being transitory, and that of a .tizen permanent, the latter capacity it was oped would of course preponderate in all iscussions, not only between the people and he standing authority of the Crown, but ıetween the people and the fleeting authority ıf the House of Commons itself. It was ıoped that, being of a middle nature between ıubject and government, they would feel with ı more tender and a nearer interest everyhing that concerned the people than the ther remoter and more permanent parts of egislature.

. . . . .

For it is not the derivation of the power f that House from the people which makes in a distinct sense their representative. he king is the representative of the people; ɔ are the lords; so are the judges. They l are trustees for the people, as well as the ɔmmons, because no power is given for the

sole sake of the holder; and although government certainly is an institution of divine authority, yet its forms, and the persons who administer it, all originate from the people.

A popular origin cannot therefore be the characteristical distinction of a popular representative. This belongs equally to all parts of government, and in all forms. The virtue, spirit, and essence of a House of Commons consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation. It was not instituted to be a control *upon* the people, as of late it has been taught by a doctrine of the most pernicious tendency. It was designed as a control *for* the people.

. . . . .

A vigilant and jealous eye over executory and judicial magistracy; an anxious care of public money, an openness approaching towards facility to public complaint: these seem to be the true characteristics of a House of Commons.—*Thoughts on Pres. Disc*

Parliament is not a *congress* of ambassadors
n different and hostile interests; which
erests each must maintain, as an agent
l advocate, against other agents and
vocates; but Parliament is a *deliberative*
embly of *one* nation, with *one* interest, that
the whole; where not local purposes, not
al prejudices, ought to guide, but the
neral good, resulting from the general
son of the whole. You choose a member
leed; but when you have chosen him, he
not member of Bristol, but he is a member
Parliament.—Speech on Conclu. of Poll.

The House of Commons is not, by its
nplexion, peculiarly subject to the dis-
npers of an independent habit. Very
le compulsion is necessary on the part of
people to render it abundantly com-
isant to ministers and favourites of all
criptions. It required a great length of
e, very considerable industry and persever-
e, no vulgar policy, the union of many

men and many tempers, and the concurrence of events which do not happen every day, to build up an independent House of Commons. Its demolition was accomplished in a moment; and it was the work of ordinary hands. But to construct is a matter of skill; to demolish, force and fury are sufficient.—*Pref. to Motion rel. to Speech from Throne.*

THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF ANY ASSEMBLY DETERMINED BY THAT OF THE MAJORITY OF THOSE WHO COMPOSE IT.

But whatever the distinguished few may have been, it is the substance and mass of the body which constitutes its character, and must finally determine its direction. In all bodies, those who will lead must also, in a considerable degree, follow. They must conform their propositions to the taste, talent, and disposition of those whom they wish to conduct: therefore if an assembly is viciously or feebly composed in a very great part of it, nothing but such a supreme degree of

virtue as very rarely appears in the world, and for that reason cannot enter into calculation, will prevent the men of talents disseminated through it from becoming only the expert instruments of absurd projects! If, what is the more likely event, instead of that unusual degree of virtue, they should be actuated by sinister ambition, and a lust of meretricious glory, then the feeble part of the assembly, to whom at first they conform, becomes in its turn the dupe and instrument of their designs. In this political traffic the leaders will be obliged to bow to the ignorance of their followers, and the followers to become subservient to the worst designs of their leaders.

To secure any degree of sobriety in the propositions made by the leaders in any public assembly, they ought to respect, in some degree perhaps to fear, those whom they conduct. To be led any otherwise than blindly, the followers must be qualified, if not for actors, at least for judges; they must also

be judges of natural weight and authority. Nothing can secure a steady and moderate conduct in such assemblies but that the body of them should be respectably composed, in point of condition in life, of permanent property, of education, and of such habits as enlarge and liberalise the understanding.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Twofold Character of Parliament—Local and Imperial.

The Parliament of Great Britain sits at the head of her extensive empire in two capacities: one as the local legislature of this island, providing for all things at home, immediately, and by no other instrument than the executive power.—The other, and I think her nobler capacity, is what I call her *imperial character;* in which, as from the throne of heaven, she superintends all the several inferior legislatures, and guides and controls them all without annihilating any. As all these provincial legislatures are

only co-ordinate with each other, they ought all to be subordinate to her; else they can neither preserve mutual peace, nor hope for mutual justice, nor effectually afford mutual assistance. It is necessary to coerce the negligent, to restrain the violent, and to aid the weak and deficient, by the overruling plenitude of her power. She is never to intrude into the place of the others, whilst they are equal to the common ends of their institution. But in order to enable Parliament to answer all these ends of provident and beneficent superintendence, her powers must be boundless.—*Speech on Amer. Taxation.*

The Relations which ought to subsist between a Member and his Constituents.

Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their

opinion high respect; their business unremitted attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs; and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiassed opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure; no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

. . . . .

To deliver an opinion is the right of all men; that of constituents is a weighty and respectable opinion which a representative ought always to rejoice to hear; and which he ought always most seriously to consider. But *authoritative* instructions; *mandates*

issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgment and conscience,—these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenor of our constitution.—*Speech on Conclu. of Poll.*

I did not obey your instructions: No. I conformed to the instructions of truth and nature, and maintained your interest against your opinions with a constancy that became me. A representative worthy of you ought to be a person of stability. I am to look, indeed, to your opinions; but to such opinions as you and I *must* have five years hence. I was not to look to the flash of the day. I knew that you chose me in my place, along with others, to be a pillar of the state, and not a weathercock on the top of the edifice, exalted for my levity and versatility, and of no use but to indicate the

shiftings of every fashionable gale.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

Let me say with plainness, I who am no longer in a public character, that if by a fair, by an indulgent, by a gentlemanly behaviour to our representatives, we do not give confidence to their minds, and a liberal scope to their understandings; if we do not permit our members to act upon a *very* enlarged view of things; we shall at length infallibly degrade our national representation into a confused and scuffing bustle of local agency. When the popular member is narrowed in his ideas, and rendered timid in his proceedings, the service of the Crown will be the sole nursery of statesmen.

. . . .

Depend upon it, that the lovers of freedom will be free.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

TO BE A GOOD MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT NO EASY TASK.

To be a good member of Parliament is,

let me tell you, no easy task; especially at this time, when there is so strong a disposition to run into the perilous extremes of *servile* compliance or *wild popularity*. To unite circumspection with vigour is absolutely necessary; but it is extremely difficult. We are now members for a rich commercial *city;* this city, however, is but a part of a rich commercial *nation*, the interests of which are *various, multiform, and intricate.* We are members for that great *nation* which, however, is itself but a part of a great *empire*, extended by our virtue and our fortune to the farthest limits of the east and of the west. *All* these wide-spread interests must be *considered;* must be *compared;* must be *reconciled*, if possible. We are members for a *free* country; and surely we all know that the machine of a free constitution is no *simple* thing; but as *intricate* and as *delicate* as it is valuable. We are members in a *great and ancient* MONARCHY; *and we must preserve religiously the true legal rights of the sovereign,*

which form the keystone that binds together the noble and well-constructed arch of our empire and our constitution. A constitution made up of *balanced powers* must ever be a critical thing. As such I mean to touch that part of it which comes within my reach.—*Speech on Conclu. of Poll.*

Faithful watchmen we ought to be over the rights and privileges of the people. But our duty, if we are qualified for it as we ought, is to give them information, and not to receive it from them; we are not to go to school to them to learn the principles of law and government. In doing so we should not dutifully serve, but we should basely and scandalously betray, the people, who are not capable of this service by nature, nor in any instance called to it by the constitution. I reverentially look up to the opinion of the people, and with an awe that is almost superstitious. I should be ashamed to show my face before them, if I changed my ground,

as they cried up or cried down men, or things, or opinions; if I wavered and shifted about with every change, and joined in it, or opposed, as best answered any low interest or passion; if I held them up hopes which I knew I never intended, or promised what I well knew I could not perform. Of all these things they are perfect sovereign judges, without appeal; but as to the detail of particular measures, or to any general schemes of policy, they have neither enough of speculation in the closet nor of experience in business to decide upon it.—*Speech on Dur. of Parliaments.*

Our System of Representation one of Interests.

These opposed and conflicting interests, which you considered as so great a blemish in your old and in our present constitution, interpose a salutary check to all precipitate resolutions. They render deliberation a matter not of choice, but of necessity; they

make all change a subject of *compromise*, which naturally begets moderation; they produce *temperaments* preventing the sore evil of harsh, crude, unqualified reformations; and rendering all the headlong exertions of arbitrary power, in the few or in the many, for ever impracticable.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Independence of mind will ever be more or less influenced by independence of fortune. —*Letter on Dur. of Parliaments.*

Popular Elections.

To govern according to the sense and agreeably to the interests of the people is a great and glorious object of government. This object cannot be obtained but through the medium of popular election; and popular election is a mighty evil. It is such, and so great an evil, that though there are few nations whose monarchs were not originally elective, very few are now elected. They

are the distempers of elections that have destroyed all free states.—*Letter on Dur. of Parliaments.*

Dangers incident to an Extended Franchise.

But admit it were true that the great mass of the electors were too vast an object for court influence to grasp or extend to, and that in despair they must abandon it; he must be very ignorant of the state of every popular interest who does not know that in all the corporations, all the open boroughs, indeed in every district of the kingdom, there is some leading man, some agitator, some wealthy merchant or considerable manufacturer, some active attorney, some popular preacher, some money-lender, etc. etc., who is followed by the whole flock. This is the style of all free countries.

——Multum in Fabiâ valet hic, valet ille Velinâ;
Cuilibet hic fasces dabit eripietque curule.

These spirits, each of which informs and

governs his own little orb, are neither s many, nor so little powerful, nor so inco ruptible, but that a minister may, as he do frequently, find means of gaining them, an through them all their followers.—*Letter o Dur. of Parliaments.*

What Duty imposes on Men in Situations of Public Trust.

It is not enough in a situation of trust i the commonwealth that a man means we to his country; it is not enough that in hi single person he never did an evil act, bu always voted according to his conscienc and even harangued against every desig which he apprehended to be prejudicial t the interests of his country. This innoxiou and ineffectual character that seems forme upon a plan of apology and disculpatio falls miserably short of the mark of publ duty. That duty demands and requir that what is right should not only be ma known, but made prevalent; that what

evil should not only be detected, but defeated. When the public man omits to put himself in a situation of doing his duty with effect, it is an omission that frustrates the purposes of his trust almost as much as if he had formally betrayed it. It is surely no very rational account of a man's life that he has always acted right; but has taken special care to act in such a manner that his endeavours could not possibly be productive of any consequence.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Public life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

A Member is under no Obligation to be Popular.

Would the little, silly, canvass prattle of obeying instructions, and having no opinions but yours, and such idle senseless tales

which amuse the vacant ears of unthinkin men, have saved you from "the pelting c that pitiless storm," to which the loose in providence, the cowardly rashness, of thos who dare not look danger in the face, so a to provide against it in time, and therefo throw themselves headlong into the midst c it, have exposed this degraded nation, beate down and prostrate on the earth, unsheltere unarmed, unresisting? Was I an Irishma on that day that I boldly withstood o pride? or on the day that I hung down m head, and wept in shame and silence ov the humiliation of Great Britain? I becam unpopular in England for the one, and i Ireland for the other. What then? Wh obligation lay on me to be popular? I w bound to serve both kingdoms. To b pleased with my service was their affai not mine.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

In this House we submit, though wi troubled minds, to that order which h connected all great duties with toils ar

with perils, which has conducted the road to glory through the regions of obloquy and reproach, and which will never suffer the disparaging alliance of spurious, false, and fugitive praise with genuine and permanent reputation.—*Letter to R. Burke.*

Our Liberty an Entailed Inheritance.

You will observe that, from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom, without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves a unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and a house of commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties, from a long line of ancestors.

The policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper and confined views. People will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors. Besides, the people of England well know that the idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation and a sure principle of transmission, without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires. Whatever advantages are obtained by a state proceeding on these maxims are locked fast as in a sort of family settlement, grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever. By a constitutional policy working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we transmit our government and our privileges in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives. The institutions of

policy, the goods of fortune, the gifts of providence, are handed down to us, and from us, in the same course and order. Our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but, in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve, we are never wholly new; in what we retain, we are never wholly obsolete. By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our forefathers, we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of

inheritance we have given to our frame c polity the image of a relation in blood binding up the constitution of our countr with our dearest domestic ties; adoptin our fundamental laws into the bosom of ou family affections; keeping inseparable, an cherishing with the warmth of all their com bined and mutually-reflected charities, ou state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and ou altars.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Civil Freedom not an Abstract Speculation.

Civil freedom, gentlemen, is not, as many have endeavoured to persuade you, a thing that lies hid in the depth of abstruse science It is a blessing and a benefit, not an abstrac speculation; and all the just reasoning tha can be upon it is of so coarse a texture a perfectly to suit the ordinary capacities c those who are to enjoy and of those wh are to defend it. Far from any resemblanc to those propositions in geometry and meta

physics, which admit no medium, but must be true or false in all their latitude; social and civil freedom, like all other things in common life, are variously mixed and modified, enjoyed in very different degrees, and shaped into an infinite diversity of forms, according to the temper and circumstances of every community.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Liberty must be Limited in order to be Possessed.

The *extreme* of liberty (which is its abstract perfection, but its real fault) obtains nowhere, nor ought to obtain anywhere. Because extremes, as we all know, in every point which relates either to our duties or satisfactions in life, are destructive both to virtue and enjoyment. Liberty too must be limited in order to be possessed. The degree of restraint it is impossible in any case to settle precisely. But it ought to be the constant aim of every wise, public council

to find out by cautious experiments ar rational, cool endeavours, with how littl not how much, of this restraint the con munity can subsist.—*Letter to Sheriffs* *Bristol.*

THE VERY IDEA OF GENUINE LIBERTY EXTREMELY RARE.

I must fairly tell you that, so far as m principles are concerned (principles that hope will only depart with my last breath), have no idea of a liberty unconnected wit honesty and justice. Nor do I believe tha any good constitutions of government c of freedom can find it necessary for the security to doom any part of the people t a permanent slavery. Such a constitutio of freedom, if such can be, is in effect n more than another name for the tyranny the strongest faction; and factions in repul lics have been, and are, full as capable monarchs of the most cruel oppression an injustice. It is but too true that the lov

and even the very idea, of genuine liberty is extremely rare. It is but too true that there are many whose whole scheme of freedom is made up of pride, perverseness, and insolence. They feel themselves in a state of thraldom, they imagine that their souls are cooped and cabined in, unless they have some man or some body of men dependent on their mercy.

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This disposition is the true source of the passion which many men in very humble life have taken to the American War. *Our* subjects in America; *our* colonies; *our* dependants. This lust of party-power is the liberty they hunger and thirst for; and this Syren song of ambition has charmed ears that one would have thought were never organised to that sort of music.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

Partial freedom is privilege and prerogative, and not liberty. Liberty, such as deserves the name, is an honest, equitable, diffusive,

and impartial principle. It is a great and enlarged virtue, and not a sordid, selfish, and illiberal vice. It is the portion of the mass of the citizens, and not the haughty license of some potent individual or some predominant faction.—*Letter to R. Burke.*

No True Liberty without Justice, Virtue, and Order.

The distinguishing part of our constitution is its liberty. To preserve that liberty inviolate seems the particular duty and proper trust of a member of the House of Commons. But the liberty, the only liberty I mean, is a liberty connected with order; that not only exists along with order and virtue, but which cannot exist at all without them. It inheres in good and steady government as in its substance and vital principle.—*Speech on Arr. at Bristol.*

Above all, we cannot be too cautious in our communication with those who seek

their happiness by other roads than those of humanity, morals, and religion, and whose liberty consists, and consists alone, in being free from those restraints which are imposed by the virtues upon the passions.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

At that time I was connected with men of high place in the community. The liberty they pursued was a liberty inseparable from order, from virtue, from morals, and from religion; and was neither hypocritically nor fanatically followed. They did not wish that liberty, in itself one of the first of blessings, should in its perversion become the greatest curse which could fall upon mankind.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

I shall always, however, consider that liberty as very equivocal in her appearance which has not wisdom and justice for her companions, and does not lead prosperity and plenty in her train.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Moral Questions never Abstract Ones.

As no moral questions are ever abstract questions, this, before I judge upon any abstract proposition, must be embodied in circumstances; for since things are right or wrong, morally speaking, only by their relation and connection with other things, this very question of what it is politically right to grant depends upon this relation to its effects. It is the direct office of wisdom to look to the consequences of the acts we do; if it be not this it is worth nothing, it is out of place and of function; and a downright fool is as capable of government as Charles Fox. A man desires a sword; why should he be refused? a sword is a means of defence, and defence is the natural right of man,—nay, the first of all his rights, and which comprehends them all. But if I know that the sword desired is to be employed to cut my own throat, common sense and my own self-defence dictate to me to keep out

of his hands this natural right of the sword. —*Speech on Pet. of Unitarians.*

He (Mr. Burke) could not admit the right of any people to do what they pleased until he first knew what it pleased them to do.—Quoted in Prior's *Life of Burke*, p. 321.

LIBERTY MAY OR MAY NOT BE A BLESSING.

Abstractedly speaking, government, as well as liberty, is good.

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Is it because liberty in the abstract may be classed amongst the blessings of mankind that I am seriously to felicitate a madman, who has escaped from the protecting restraint and wholesome darkness of his cell, on his restoration to the enjoyment of light and liberty? Am I to congratulate a highwayman and murderer, who has broke prison, upon the recovery of his natural rights?—*Speech on Ref. of Representation.*

Men must have a certain fund of natural moderation to qualify them for freedom, else it becomes noxious to themselves and a perfect nuisance to everybody else.—*Letter to Lord Charlemont.*

Restraint sometimes a Substitute for Freedom.

To men so degraded a state of strong restraint is a sort of necessary substitute for freedom; since, bad as it is, it may deliver them in some measure from the worst of all slavery, that is, the despotism of their own blind and brutal passions. Permit me to tell you what the freedom is that I love. It is not solitary, unconnected, individual, selfish liberty. It is social freedom. It is that state of things in which the liberty of no man, and no body of men, is in a condition to trespass on the liberty of any person, or any description of persons, in a society.—*Letter to M. de Menonville.*

LIBERTY SECURED BY EQUALITY OF RESTRAINT.

You hope, sir, that I think the French deserving of liberty. I certainly do. I certainly think that all men who desire it, deserve it. We cannot forfeit our right to it but by what forfeits our title to the privileges of our kind. The liberty I mean is SOCIAL freedom. It is that state of things in which liberty is secured by equality of restraint. This kind of liberty is indeed but another name for justice. Whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice, neither is in my opinion safe.—*Letter to M. de Menonville.*

MEN OF INTEMPERATE MINDS CANNOT BE FREE.

Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites; in proportion as their love to justice is above their rapacity; in proportion as their soundness and sobriety of understanding is above their

vanity and presumption; in proportion as they are more disposed to listen to the counsels of the wise and good, in preference to the flattery of knaves. Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.—*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

All who have ever written on government are unanimous that among a people generally corrupt, liberty cannot long exist. And indeed how is it possible? when those who are to make the laws, to guard, to enforce, or to obey them, are, by a tacit confederacy of manners, indisposed to the spirit of all generous and noble institutions.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

Civil Society the Offspring of Convention.

If civil society be the offspring of convention, that convention must be its law. That convention must limit and modify all the descriptions of constitution which are formed under it. Every sort of legislature, judicial, or executory power, are its creatures. They can have no being in any other state of things; and how can any man claim, under the conventions of civil society, rights which do not so much as suppose its existence? Rights which are absolutely repugnant to it? One of the first motives to civil society, and which becomes one of its fundamental rules, is, *that no man should be judge in his own cause.* By this each person has at once divested himself of the first fundamental right of uncovenanted man, that is, to judge for himself, and to assert his own cause. He abdicates all right to be his own governor. He inclusively, in a great measure, abandons

the right of self-defence, the first law of nature. Men cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil and of a civil state together. That he may obtain justice, he gives up his right of determining what it is in points the most essential to him. That he may secure some liberty, he makes a surrender in trust of the whole of it.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Social Contract.

Society is indeed a contract. Subordinate contracts for objects of mere occasional interest may be dissolved at pleasure—but the state ought not to be considered nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some other such low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest, and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked on with other reverence; because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is

a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born. Each contract of each particular state is but a clause in the great primeval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and invisible world, according to a fixed compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral natures, each in their appointed place. This law is not subject to the will of those who, by an obligation above them, and infinitely superior, are bound to submit their will to that law. The municipal corporations of that universal kingdom are not morally at liberty at their pleasure, and on their speculations of a contingent improvement, wholly to separate and

tear asunder the bands of their subordinate community, and to dissolve it into an unsocial, uncivil, unconnected chaos of elementary principles. It is the first and supreme necessity only, a necessity that is not chosen, but chooses, a necessity paramount to deliberation, that admits no discussion and demands no evidence, which alone can justify a resort to anarchy. This necessity is no exception to the rule, because this necessity itself is a part too of that moral and physical disposition of things to which man must be obedient by consent or force; but if that which is only submission to necessity should be made the object of choice, the law is broken, nature is disobeyed, and the rebellious are outlawed, cast forth, and exiled, from this world of reason, and order, and peace, and virtue, and fruitful penitence, into the antagonist world of madness, discord, vice, confusion, and unavailing sorrow. —*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Rights of Men in Governments are their Advantages.

The pretended rights of these theorists are all extremes: and in proportion as they are metaphysically true, they are morally and politically false. The rights of men are in a sort of *middle*, incapable of definition, but not impossible to be discerned. The rights of men in governments are their advantages; and these are often in balances between differences of good; in compromises sometimes between good and evil, and sometimes between evil and evil. Political reason is a computing principle; adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, morally and not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral denominations.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Real Rights of Man.

Far am I from denying in theory, full as far is my heart from withholding in practice (if I were of power to give or to

withhold), the *real* rights of men. In denying their false claims of right, I do not mean to injure those which are real, and are such as their pretended rights would totally destroy. If civil society be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right. It is an institution of beneficence; and law itself is only beneficence acting by a rule. Men have a right to live by that rule; they have a right to do justice; as between their fellows, whether their fellows are in politic function or in ordinary occupation. They have a right to the fruits of their industry; and to the means of making their industry fruitful. They have a right to the acquisitions of their parents; to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring; to instruction in life, and to consolation in death. Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for himself; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which society, with all its

combinations of skill and force, can do in his favour. In this partnership all men have equal rights; but not to equal things. He that has but five shillings in the partnership, has as good a right to it as he that has five hundred pounds has to his larger proportion. But he has not a right to an equal dividend in the product of the joint-stock; and as to the share of power, authority, and direction which each individual ought to have in the management of the state, that I must deny to be amongst the direct original rights of man in civil society; for I have in my contemplation the civil social man, and no other. It is a thing to be settled by convention.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Those who Level never Equalise.

Believe me, sir, those who attempt to level never equalise. In all societies consisting of various descriptions of citizens, some description must be uppermost. The levellers therefore only change and pervert

the natural order of things; they load the edifice of society by setting up in the air what the solidity of the structure requires to be on the ground.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

A perfect equality will indeed be produced;—that is to say, equal want, equal wretchedness, equal beggary, and on the part of the petitioners, a woful, helpless, and desperate disappointment. Such is the event of all compulsory equalisations. They pull down what is above. They never raise what is below: and they depress high and low together beneath the level of what was originally the lowest.—*Thoughts on Scarcity.*

By following wise examples you would have given new examples of wisdom to the world. You would have rendered the cause of liberty venerable in the eyes of every worthy mind in every nation. You would have shamed despotism from the earth, by showing that freedom was not only recon-

cilable, but as, when well disciplined it is, auxiliary to law.

. . . . .

You would have had a protected, satisfied, laborious, and obedient people, taught to seek and to recognise the happiness that is to be found by virtue in all conditions; in which consists the true moral equality of mankind, and not in that monstrous fiction, which, by inspiring false ideas and vain expectations into men destined to travel in the obscure walk of laborious life, serves only to aggravate and embitter that real inequality which it never can remove; and which the order of civil life establishes, as much for the benefit of those whom it must leave in a humble state, as those whom it is able to exalt to a condition more splendid, but not more happy.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE POWER AND DECISIONS OF A MAJORITY TO ALTER THE CONSTITUTION.

We are so little affected by things which

are habitual, that we consider this idea of the decision of a *majority* as if it were a law of our original nature: but such constructive whole, residing in a part only, is one of the most violent fictions of positive law, that ever has been or can be made on the principles of artificial incorporation. Out of civil society nature knows nothing of it; nor are men, even when arranged according to civil order, otherwise than by very long training, brought at all to submit to it. The mind is brought far more easily to acquiesce in the proceedings of one man, or a few who act under a general procuration for the state, than in the vote of a victorious majority in councils, in which every man has his share in the deliberation. For there the beaten party are exasperated and soured by the previous contention, and mortified by the conclusive defeat.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

The constitution of a country being once settled upon some compact, tacit or ex-

pressed, there is no power existing of force to alter it without the breach of the covenant or the consent of all the parties. Such is the nature of a contract. And the votes of a majority of the people, whatever their infamous flatterers may teach in order to corrupt their minds, cannot alter the moral any more than they can alter the physical essence of things.

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To flatter any man, or any part of mankind, in any description, by asserting that in engagements he or they are free whilst any other human creature is bound, is ultimately to vest the rule of morality in the pleasure of those who ought to be rigidly submitted to it; to subject the sovereign reason of the world to the caprices of weak and giddy men. —*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

No Legislator has hitherto placed Active Power in the Hands of the Multitude.

It is not necessary to teach men to thirst

after power. But it is very expedient that by moral instruction they should be taught, and by their civil constitutions they should be compelled, to put many restrictions upon the immoderate exercise of it, and the inordinate desire. The best method of obtaining these two great points forms the important, but at the same time the difficult, problem to the true statesman. He thinks of the place in which political power is to be lodged, with no other attention than as it may render the more or the less practicable, its salutary restraint and its prudent direction. For this reason no legislator, at any period of the world, has willingly placed the seat of active power in the hands of the multitude; because there it admits of no control, no regulation, no steady direction whatsoever. The people are the natural control on authority; but to exercise and to control together is contradictory and impossible.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

The will of the many, and their interest, must very often differ; and great will be the difference when they make an evil choice.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Baseness of the Political Cant about "The Labouring Poor."

Nothing can be so base and so wicked as the political canting language, "the labouring *poor.*" Let compassion be shown in action, the more the better, according to every man's ability; but let there be no lamentation of their condition. It is no relief to their miserable circumstances; it is only an insult to their miserable understandings. It arises from a total want of charity, or a total want of thought. Want of one kind was never relieved by want of any other kind. Patience, labour, sobriety, frugality, and religion should be recommended to them; all the rest is downright *fraud.* It is horrible to call them, "The *once happy* labourer."

Whether what may be called the moral or philosophical happiness of the laborious classes is increased or not, I cannot say. The seat of that species of happiness is in the mind; and there are few data to ascertain the comparative state of the mind at any two periods. Philosophical happiness is to want little. Civil or vulgar happiness is to want much and to enjoy much.—*Thoughts on Scarcity.*

We have heard many plans for the relief of the "*labouring poor.*" This puling jargon is not as innocent as it is foolish. In meddling with great affairs weakness is never innoxious. Hitherto the name of poor (in the sense in which it is used to excite compassion) has not been used for those who can, but for those who cannot, labour—for the sick and infirm, for orphan infancy, for languishing and decrepid age; but when we affect to pity as poor those who must labour or the world cannot exist, we are trifling with the condition of mankind. It is the

common doom of man that he must eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, that is, by the sweat of his body or the sweat of his mind.

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I do not call a healthy young man, cheerful in his mind and vigorous in his arms, I cannot call such a man *poor;* I cannot pity my kind as a kind merely because they are men. This affected pity only tends to dissatisfy them with their condition, and to teach them to seek resources where no resources are to be found, in something else than their own industry, and frugality, and sobriety. Whatever may be the intention (which, because I do not know, I cannot dispute) of those who would discontent mankind by this strange pity, they act towards us, in the consequences, as if they were our worst enemies.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

THOSE WHO SUFFER FROM AN OPPRESSION NOT THE BEST JUDGES OF THE TRUE REMEDY.

The most poor, illiterate, and uninformed

creatures upon earth are judges of a *practical* oppression. It is a matter of feeling; and as such persons generally have felt most of it, and are not of an over-lively sensibility, they are the best judges of it. But for the *real cause*, or the *appropriate remedy*, they ought never to be called into council about the one or the other. They ought to be totally shut out; because their reason is weak; because, when once roused, their passions are ungoverned; because they want information; because the smallness of the property which individually they possess, renders them less attentive to the consequence of the measures they adopt in affairs of moment. When I find a great cry amongst the people who speculate little, I think myself called seriously to examine into it, and to separate the real cause from the ill effects of the passion it may excite; and the bad use which artful men may make of an irritation of the popular mind.—*Letter to Sir H. Langrishe.*

It is very rare indeed for men to be wrong in their feelings concerning public misconduct; as rare to be right in their speculation upon the cause of it. I have constantly observed that the generality of people are fifty years, at least, behindhand in their politics.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

The Energy of the Wicked makes them Formidable.

What have they then to supply their innumerable defects, and to make them terrible even to the firmest minds? *One* thing, and *one* thing only—but that one thing is worth a thousand—they have *energy.*

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If we meet this dreadful and portentous energy, restrained by no consideration of God or man, that is always vigilant, always on the attack, that allows itself no repose, nd suffers none to rest an hour with impunity; if we meet this energy with poor

commonplace proceeding, with trivial maxims, paltry old saws, with doubts, fears, and suspicions, with a languid, uncertain hesitation, with a formal, official spirit, which is turned aside by every obstacle from its purpose, and which never sees a difficulty but to yield to it, or at best to evade it; down we go to the bottom of the abyss—and nothing short of Omnipotence can save us.—*Remarks on Policy of Allies.*

When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle. —*Remarks on Policy of Allies.*

A Democracy has many Striking Points of Resemblance with a Tyranny.

If I recollect rightly, Aristotle observes that a democracy has many striking points of resemblance with a tyranny. Of this I am certain, that in a democracy the majority the citizens is capable of exercising the most

cruel oppressions upon the minority, whenever strong divisions prevail in that kind of polity, as they often must; and that oppression of the minority will extend to far greater numbers, and will be carried on with much greater fury, than can almost ever be apprehended from the dominion of a single sceptre.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Dangers from Ambitious Men in a Democracy.

As the exorbitant exercise of power cannot under popular sway be effectually restrained, the other great object of political arrangement, the means of abating an excessive desire of it, is in such a state still worse provided for. The democratic commonwealth is the foodful nurse of ambition. Under the other forms it meets with many restraints. Whenever, in states which have had a democratic basis, the legislators have endeavoured to put restraints upon ambition, their methods were as violent as in the end they were in-

effectual: as violent indeed as any the most jealous despotism could invent. The ostracism could not very long save itself, and much less the state which it was meant to guard from the attempts of ambition, one of the natural, inbred, incurable distempers of a powerful democracy.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Men love to hear of their Power but not of their Duties.

I am well aware that men love to hear of their power, but have an extreme disrelish to be told of their duty. This is, of course, because every duty is a limitation of some power. Indeed arbitrary power is so much to the depraved taste of the vulgar, of the vulgar of every description, that almost all the dissensions which lacerate the commonwealth, are not concerning the manner in which it is to be exercised, but concerning the hands in which it is to be placed. Somewhere they are resolved to have it. Whether

they desire it to be vested in the many or the few, depends with most men upon the chance which they imagine they themselves may have of partaking in the exercise of that arbitrary sway, in the one mode or in the other.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Duties not Voluntary.

I cannot too often recommend it to the serious consideration of all men, who think civil society to be within the province of moral jurisdiction, that if we owe to it any duty, it is not subject to our will. Duties are not voluntary. Duty and will are even contradictory terms. Now though civil society might be at first a voluntary act (which in many cases it undoubtedly was), its continuance is under a permanent, standing covenant, co-existing with the society; and it attaches upon every individual of that society, without any formal act of his own. This is warranted by the general practice, arising out of the general sense of mankind.

Men without their choice derive benefits from that association; without their choice they are subjected to duties in consequence of these benefits; and without their choice they enter into a virtual obligation as binding as any that is actual. Look through the whole of life and the whole system of duties. Much the strongest moral obligations are such as were never the results of our option. I allow, that if no supreme ruler exists, wise to form and potent to enforce the moral law, there is no sanction to any contract, virtual or even actual, against the will of prevalent power. On that hypothesis, let any set of men be strong enough to set their duties at defiance, and they cease to be duties any longer. We have but this one appeal against irresistible power—

"*Si genus humanum et mortalia temnitis arma,*
At sperate Deos memores fandi atque nefandi."

—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Metaphysical Abstractions have little Concern with Practical Politics.

It is not worth our while to discuss, like sophisters, whether, in no case, some evil, for the sake of some benefit, is to be tolerated. Nothing universal can be rationally affirmed on any moral or any political subject. Pure metaphysical abstraction does not belong to these matters. The lines of morality are not like ideal lines of mathematics. They are broad and deep as well as long. They admit of exceptions; they demand modifications. These exceptions and modifications are not made by the process of logic, but by the rules of prudence. Prudence is not only the first in rank of the virtues political and moral, but she is the director, the regulator, the standard of them all. Metaphysics cannot live without definition; but prudence is cautious how she defines. Our courts cannot be more fearful in suffering fictitious cases to be brought before them for eliciting their

determination on a point of law, than prudent moralists are in putting extreme and hazardous cases of conscience upon emergencies not existing.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Whether all this can be reconciled in legal speculation is a matter of no consequence. It is reconciled in policy; and politics ought to be adjusted, not to human reasonings, but to human nature; of which the reason is but a part, and by no means the greatest part.—*Obser. on Pres. State of Nations.*

The practical consequences of any political tenet go a great way in deciding upon its value. Political problems do not primarily concern truth or falsehood. They relate to good or evil. What in the result is likely to produce evil is politically false: that which is productive of good, politically true.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Men of Science take too little Account of Human Feelings.

The geometricians and the chemists bring, the one from the dry bones of their diagrams and the other from the soot of their furnaces, dispositions that make them worse than indifferent about those feelings and habitudes which are the supports of the moral world. Ambition is come upon them suddenly; they are intoxicated with it, and it has rendered them fearless of the danger which may from thence arise to others or to themselves. These philosophers consider men in their experiments no more than they do mice in an air pump, or in a recipient of mephitic gas.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

A Spirit of Proselytism not confined to Religious Sects.

They who have made but superficial studies in the natural history of the human

mind, have been taught to look on religious opinions as the only cause of enthusiastic zeal and sectarian propagation. But there is no doctrine whatever on which men can warm, that is not capable of the very same effect. The social nature of man impels him to propagate his principles as much as physical impulses urge him to propagate his kind. The passions give zeal and vehemence. The understanding bestows design and system. The whole man moves under the discipline of his opinions.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Dangers to be apprehended from Philosophers who are Fanatics.

I have lived long and variously in the world. Without any considerable pretensions to literature in myself, I have aspired to the love of letters. I have lived for a great many years in habitudes with those who professed them. I can form a tolerable estimate of what is likely to happen from a

character chiefly dependent for fame and fortune on knowledge and talent, as well in its morbid and perverted state as in that which is sound and natural. Naturally men so formed and finished are the first gifts of Providence to the world. But when they have once thrown off the fear of God, which was in all ages too often the case, and the fear of men, which is now the case, and when in that state they come to understand one another, and to act in corps, a more dreadful calamity cannot arise out of hell to scourge mankind. Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thorough-bred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man. It is like that of the principle of evil himself, incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil. —*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

Along with the monied interest a new description of men had grown up, with whom

that interest soon formed a close and marked union; I mean the political men of letters. Men of letters fond of distinguishing themselves are rarely averse to innovation.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Political Theories as much a Cause of Fanaticism as Religious Dogmas.

It must always have been discoverable by persons of reflection, but it is now obvious to the world, that a theory concerning government may become as much a cause of fanaticism as a *dogma* in religion. There is a boundary to men's passions when they act from feeling; none when they are under the influence of imagination. Remove a grievance, and when men act from feeling you go a great way towards quieting a commotion. But the good or bad conduct of a government, the protection men have enjoyed, or the oppression they have suffered, under it, are of no sort of moment when a faction proceeding upon speculative grounds is thoroughly

heated against its form. When a man is from system furious against monarchy or episcopacy, the good conduct of the monarch or the bishop has no other effect than further to irritate the adversary. He is provoked at it as furnishing a plea for preserving the thing which he wishes to destroy. His mind will be heated as much by the sight of a sceptre, a mace, or a verge, as if he had been daily bruised and wounded by these symbols of authority. Mere spectacles, mere names, will become sufficient causes to stimulate the people to war and tumult.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

The Age of Chivalry is gone.

But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart

which kept alive, even in servitud
spirit of an exalted freedom. Th
grace of life, the cheap defence
the nurse of manly sentiment
enterpise, is gone! It is gone,
bility of principle, that chastity
which felt a stain like a wound,
spired courage whilst it mitigate
which ennobled whatever it to
under which vice itself lost half
losing all its grossness.—*Reflect.*
France.

THE NEW EMPIRE OF LIGHT AN

All the pleasing illusions w
power gentle and obedience lib
harmonised the different shades
which, by a bland assimilation, i
into politics the sentiments whi
and soften private society, are to b
y this new conquering empire o
son. All the decent drapery
rudely torn off. All the super

furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns and the understanding ratifies as necessary to cover the defects of our naked, shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion.

On this scheme of things a king is but a man, a queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal, and an animal not of the highest order. All homage paid to the sex in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and sacrilege are but fictions of superstition, corrupting jurisprudence by destroying its simplicity. The murder of a king, or a queen, or a bishop, or a father, are only common homicide; and if the people are by any chance or in any way gainers by it, a sort of homicide much the most pardonable and into which we ought not to make too severe a scrutiny.

On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid wisdom as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supported only by their own terrors, and by the concern which each individual may find in them from his own private speculations, or can spare to them from his own private interests. In the groves of *their* academy, at the end of every vista, you see nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the principles of this mechanic philosophy our institutions can never be embodied, if I may use the expression, in persons; so as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But that sort of reason which banishes the affections is incapable of filling their place. These public affections, combined with manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given

by a wise man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of poems, is equally true as to states:—*Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sunto.* There ought to be a system of manners in every nation, which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish. To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Latent Wisdom in, and Value of our Prejudices.

Many of our men of speculation, instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom which prevails in them. If they find what they seek, and they seldom fail, they think it more wise to continue the prejudice, with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice, and to leave nothing but the naked reason; because prejudice, with its reason, has a motive to give action to that reason, and an affection which will give it

permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue, and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, sceptical, puzzled, and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit; and not a series of unconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

By what they call reasoning without prejudice, they leave not one stone upon another in the fabric of human society. They subvert all the authority which they hold, as well as all that which they have destroyed. —*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

The pretended rights of these theorists are all extremes: and in proportion as they are metaphysically true, they are morally and politically false.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

If anything is, one more than another, out of the power of man, it is to *create* a prejudice. Somebody has said that a king may make a nobleman, but he cannot make a gentleman.—*Letter to W. Smith.*

JACOBINISM.

Jacobinism is the revolt of the enterprising talents of a country against its property.—*Letter on Reg. Peace.*

The Jacobin faction in England must grow in strength and audacity; it will be supported by other intrigues, and supplied by other resources, than yet we have seen in action. Confounded at its growth, the government may fly to Parliament for its support. But who will answer for the temper of a house of commons elected under these circumstances? Who will answer for the courage of a house of commons to arm the Crown with the extraordinary powers that it may demand?

. . . . .

As to the House of Lords, it is not worth mentioning. The peers ought naturally to be the pillars of the Crown; but when their titles are rendered contemptible, and their property invidious, and a part of their weakness and not of their strength, they will be found so many degraded and trembling individuals, who will seek by evasion to put off the evil day of their ruin. Both Houses will be in perpetual oscillation between abortive attempts at energy and still more unsuccessful attempts at compromise. You will be impatient of your disease and abhorrent of your remedy. A spirit of subterfuge and a tone of apology will enter into all your proceedings, whether of law or legislation.—*Fourth Letter on Reg. Peace.*

One of the Lessons of History.

We do not draw the moral lessons we might from history. On the contrary, without

ıre it may be used to vitiate our minds and › destroy our happiness. In history a great olume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing he materials of future wisdom from the past :rrors and infirmities of mankind. It may, in the perversion, serve for a magazine, furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in Church and State, and supplying the means of keeping alive or reviving dissensions and animosities, and adding fuel to civil fury. History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, ıypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train ›f disorderly appetites which shake the public with the same

——"*troublous storms that toss*
The private state, and render life unsweet."

'hese vices are the *causes* of those storms. .eligion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privi-:ges, liberties, rights of men, are the *pre-xts.* The pretexts are always found in ›me specious appearance of a real good.

You would not secure men from tyranny and sedition by rooting out of the mind the principles to which these fraudulent pretexts apply. If you did, you would root out everything that is valuable in the human breast. As these are the pretexts, so the ordinary actors and instruments in great public evils are kings, priests, magistrates, senates, parliaments, national assemblies, judges, and captains. You would not cure the evil by resolving that there should be no more monarchs, nor ministers of state, nor of the Gospel ; no interpreters of law, no general officers, no public councils. You might change the names. The things in some shape must remain. A certain *quantum* of power must always exist in the community, in some hands, and under some appellation. —*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Religion.

This kind of persecutors, without zeal, without charity, know well enough that

religion, to pass by all questions of the truth or falsehood of any of its particular systems (a matter I abandon to the theologians on all sides), is a source of great comfort to us mortals in this our short but tedious journey through the world. They know that to enjoy this consolation men must believe their religion upon some principle or other, whether of education, habit, theory, or authority. When men are driven from any of those principles on which they have received religion without embracing with the same assurance and cordiality some other system, a dreadful void is left in their minds, and a terrible shock is given to their morals. They lose their guide, their comfort, their hope. None but the most cruel and hard-hearted of men, who had banished all natural tenderness from their minds, such as those beings of iron, the atheists, could bring themselves to any persecution like this. —*Letter to R. Burke.*

We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by his constitution a religious animal; that atheism is against, not only our reason, but our instincts; and that it cannot prevail long.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

We know, and what is better, we feel inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort. In England we are so convinced of this, that there is no rust of superstition with which the accumulated absurdity of the human mind might have crusted it over in the course of ages, that ninety-nine in a hundred of the people of England would not prefer to impiety.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

On that (the Christian) religion, according to our mode, all our laws and institutions stand as upon their base. That scheme is supposed in every transaction of life; and if that were done away, everything else, as

in France, must be changed along with it. Thus, religion perishing, and with it this constitution, it is a matter of endless meditation what order of things would follow it.—*Fourth Letter on Reg. Peace.*

I shall never call any religious opinions, which appear important to serious and pious minds, things of no consideration. Nothing is so fatal to religion as indifference, which is, at least, half infidelity. As long as men hold charity and justice to be essential, integral parts of religion, there can be little danger from a strong attachment to particular tenets in faith.—*Letter to W. Smith.*

Even the man who does not hold revelation, yet who wishes that it were proved to him, who observes a pious silence with regard to it, such a man, though not a Christian, is governed by religious principles.—*Speech on Relief of Protestant Dissenters.*

I will not enter into the question
much truth is preferable to peace. Perl
truth may be far better. But as we l
scarcely ever the same certainty in the
that we have in the other, I would, ur
the truth were evident indeed, hold fas
peace, which has in her company charity
highest of the virtues.—*Speech on Act
Uniformity.*

Thanks to our sullen resistance to i
vation, thanks to the cold sluggishness o
national character, we still bear the stan
our forefathers.

. . . . .

Atheists are not our preachers; mac
are not our lawgivers. We know tha
have made no discoveries; and we t
that no discoveries are to be mad
morality; nor many in the great princ
of government, nor in the ideas of lib
which were understood long before we
born, altogether as well as they will be

the grave has heaped its mould upon our presumption, and the silent tomb shall have imposed its law on our pert loquacity.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Your despots govern by terror. They know that he who fears God fears nothing else, and therefore they eradicate from the mind . . . the only sort of fear which generates true courage.—*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away, the loss cannot possibly be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to govern us; nor can we know distinctly to what port we steer.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

SUPERSTITION THE RELIGION OF FEEBLE MINDS.

You derive benefits from many dispositions and many passions of the human mind which are of as doubtful a colour, in the

moral eye, as superstition itself. It was your business to correct and mitigate everything which was noxious in this passion, as in all the passions. But is superstition the greatest of all possible vices? In its possible excess I think it becomes a very great evil. It is, however, a moral subject; and of course admits of all degrees and all modifications. Superstition is the religion of feeble minds; and they must be tolerated in an intermixture of it, in some trifling or some enthusiastic shape or other, else you will deprive weak minds of a resource found necessary to the strongest. The body of all true religion consists, to be sure, in obedience to the will of the Sovereign of the world; in a confidence in His declarations; and in imitation of His perfections. The rest is our own. It may be prejudicial to the great end; it may be auxiliary. Wise men, who as such are not *admirers* (not admirers at least of the *unera Terræ*), are not violently attached hese things, nor do they violently hate

ıem. Wisdom is not the most severe corector of folly.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Of all things wisdom is the most terrified vith epidemical fanaticism, because of all enemies it is that against which she is the least able to furnish any kind of resource.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Of Secular and Religious Education.

These enthusiasts do not scruple to avow their opinion, that a state can subsist without any religion better than with one; and that they are able to supply the place of any good which may be in it by a project of their own—namely, by a sort of education they have imagined, founded in a knowledge of the physical wants of men; progressively carried to an enlightened self-interest, which, when well understood, they tell us, will identify with an interest more enlarged and public. The scheme of this education has been [illegible]g known.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Dissent and Dissenters.

Let him recollect, along with the injuries, the services which dissenters have done to your Church and to our State. If they have once destroyed, more than once they have saved them.—*Speech on Acts of Uniformity.*

Dissent, not satisfied with toleration, is not conscience, but ambition.—*Speech on Acts of Uniformity.*

A Toleration begotten of Indifference.

We hear these new teachers continually boasting of their spirit of toleration. That those persons should tolerate all opinions, who think none to be of estimation, is a matter of small merit. Equal neglect is not impartial kindness. The species of benevolence, which arises from contempt, is no true charity.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Habits and Customs of a People of more Importance than its Laws.

Manners are of more importance than laws. Upon them, in a great measure, the laws depend. The law touches us but here and there, and now and then. Manners are what vex or soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarise or refine us, by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation like that of the air we breathe in. They give their whole form and colour to our lives. According to their quality, they aid morals, they supply them, or they totally destroy them.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Nor is it the worst effect of this unnatural contention, that our *laws* are corrupted. Whilst *manners* remain entire, they will correct the vices of law, and soften it at length to their own temper.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

The Influence of Principles.

The consequence is not certain; bı general change of principles rarely hap among a people without leading to a cha of government.—*Add. to Brit. Col. in America.*

The bulk of mankind on their part not excessively curious concerning theories whilst they are really happy; one sure symptom of an ill-conducted s is the propensity of the people to resoı them.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

The Constitution as by Law Establish

The king is the representative of people; so are the lords; so are the juc They all are trustees for the people, as as the commons, because no power is g for the sole sake of the holder; and althc government certainly is an institutior

divine authority, yet its forms, and the persons who administer it, all originate from the people.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects, the lords and commons of this realm—the triple cord which no man can break; the solemn, sworn, constitutional frank-pledge of this nation; the firm guarantees of each other's being and each other's rights; the joint and several securities, each in its place and order, for every kind and every quality of property and of dignity:—as long as these endure, so long the Duke of Bedford is safe: and we are all safe together—the high from the blights of envy and the spoliations of rapacity; the low from the iron hand of oppression and the insolent spurn of contempt.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

Old establishments are tried by their effects. If the people are happy, united,

wealthy, and powerful, we presume the rest. We conclude that to be good from whence good is derived.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

This constitution in former days used to be the admiration and the envy of the world; it was the pattern for politicians; the theme of the eloquent; the meditation o. the philosopher in every part of the world. As to Englishmen, it was their pride, their consolation. By it they lived, for it they were ready to die. Its defects, if it had any, were partly covered by partiality and partly borne by prudence. Now all its excellencies are forgot, its faults are now orcibly dragged into day, exaggerated by every artifice of representation. It is desised and rejected of men; and every device and invention of ingenuity or idleness set up in opposition or in preference to it. It is to this humour, nd it is to the meaures growing out of it, at I set myself (I hope not alone) in the st determined oposition.

. . . . .

The constitution of England is never to have a quietus; it is to be continually vilified, attacked, reproached, resisted; instead of being the hope and sure anchor in all storms, instead of being the means of redress to all grievances, itself is the grand grievance of the nation, our shame instead of our glory. —*Speech on Ref. of Representation.*

It has been the misfortune (not, as these gentlemen think it, the glory) of this age, that everything is to be discussed, as if the constitution of our country were to be always a subject rather of altercation than enjoyment.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

THE PRESENT POSSESSORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH SHOULD ACT AS TRUSTEES FOR FUTURITY.

But one of the first and most leading principles on which the commonwealth and the laws are consecrated, is lest the temporary

possessors and liferenters in it, unmindful of what they have received from their ancestors, or of what is due to their posterity, should act as if they were the entire masters; that they should not think it amongst their rights to cut off the entail, or commit waste on the inheritance, by destroying at their pleasure the whole original fabric of their society; hazarding to leave to those who come after them a ruin instead of a habitation—and teaching these successors as little to respect their contrivances, as they had themselves respected the institutions of their forefathers. By this unprincipled facility of changing the state as often and as much, and in as many ways, as there are floating fancies or fashions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation could link with the other. Men would become little better than the flies of a summer.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

'HE TRUE MEANING TO BE ATTACHED TO THE WORD "PEOPLE."

When the supreme authority of the people ; in question, before we attempt to extend ır to confine it, we ought to fix in our minds, vith some degree of distinctness, an idea ›f what it is we mean when we say the PEOPLE.

. . . . .

I see as little of policy or utility as there is of right, in laying down a principle that a majority of men told by the head are to be considered as the people, and that as such their will is to be law. What policy can there be found in arrangements made in defiance of every political principle? To enable men to act with the weight and character of a people, and to answer the ends for which they are incorporated into that capacity, we must suppose them (by means immediate or consequential) to be in that state of habitual social discipline in which

the wiser, the more expert, and the m
opulent conduct, and by conducting
lighten and protect, the weaker, the
knowing, and the less provided with
goods of fortune. When the multitude
not under this discipline they can scar
be said to be in civil society. Give onc
certain constitution of things, which prod
a variety of conditions and circumstance
a state, and there is in nature and reaso
principle which, for their own benefit, p
pones not the interest, but the judgmen
those who are *numero plures*, to those
are *virtute et honore majores*. Number
a state (supposing, which is not the cas
France, that a state does exist) are alv
of consideration—but they are not the w
consideration. It is in things more ser
than a play, that it may be truly said
est equitem mihi plaudere.

. . . . .

A number of men in themselves hav
collective capacity. The idea of a peop

the idea of a corporation. It is wholly artificial; and made like all other legal fictions by common agreement. What the particular nature of that agreement was, is collected from the form into which the particular society has been cast. Any other is not *their* covenant. When men, therefore, break up the original compact or agreement which gives its corporate form and capacity to a state, they are no longer a people; they have no longer a corporate existence; they have no longer a legal, coactive force to bind within, nor a claim to be recognised abroad. —*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

A True Aristocracy an Essential Integrant of a Rightly-constituted State.

A true natural aristocracy is not a separate interest in the state or separable from it. It is an essential integrant part of any large body rightly constituted. It is formed out of a class of legitimate presumptions which, taken as generalities, must be admitted for

actual truths. To be bred in a place of estimation; to see nothing low and sordid from one's infancy; to be taught to respect one's self; to be habituated to the censorial inspection of the public eye; to look early to public opinion; to stand upon such elevated ground as to be enabled to take a large view of the wide-spread and infinitely diversified combinations of men and affairs in a large society; to have leisure to read, to reflect, to converse; to be enabled to draw the court and attention of the wise and learned, wherever they are to be found;—to be habituated in armies to command and to obey; to be taught to despise danger in the pursuit of honour and duty; to be formed to the greatest degree of vigilance, foresight, and circumspection, in a state of things in which no fault is committed with impunity, and the slightest mistakes draw on the most ruinous consequences—to be led to a guarded and regulated conduct, from a sense that you are considered as an instructor of your

fellow-citizens in their highest concerns, and that you act as a reconciler between God and man—to be employed as an administrator of law and justice, and to be thereby amongst the first benefactors to mankind—to be a professor of high science or of liberal and ingenuous art—to be amongst rich traders, who from their success are presumed to have sharp and vigorous understandings, and to possess the virtues of diligence, order, constancy, and regularity, and to have cultivated an habitual regard to commutative justice—these are the circumstances of men that form what I should call a *natural* aristocracy, without which there is no nation.

The state of civil society, which necessarily generates this aristocracy, is a state of nature; and much more truly so than a savage and incoherent mode of life. For man is by nature reasonable; and he is never perfectly in his natural state, but when he is placed where reason may be best cultivated, and most predominates. Art is

man's nature. We are as much, at least, a state of nature in formed manhood as immature and helpless infancy. Men, qu fied in the manner I have just describ form in nature, as she operates in the co mon modification of society, the leadi guiding, and governing part. It is the s to the body, without which the man d not exist. To give, therefore, no more i portance, in the social order, to such desc tions of men than that of so many units i horrible usurpation.

When great multitudes act togetl under that discipline of nature I recogn the PEOPLE. I acknowledge someth that perhaps equals, and ought always guide, the sovereignty of convention. In things the voice of this grand chorus national harmony ought to have a migh and decisive influence. But when you d turb this harmony; when you break up tl beautiful order, this array of truth and natu as well as of habit and prejudice; when y

separate the common sort of men from their proper chieftains so as to form them into an adverse army, I no longer know that venerable object called the People.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

VALUE OF AN ORDER OF NOBILITY IN A STATE.

He valued the old nobility and the new, not as an excuse for inglorious sloth, but as an incitement to virtuous activity. He considered it as a sort of cure for selfishness and a narrow mind; conceiving that a man born in an elevated place in himself was nothing, but everything in what went before, and what was to come after him. Without much speculation, but by the sure instinct of ingenuous feelings, and by the dictates of plain unsophisticated, natural understanding, he felt that no great commonwealth could by any possibility long subsist without a body of some kind or other of nobility, decorated with honour and fortified by privilege. This nobility forms the chain that connects the

ages of a nation, which otherwise (with
Paine) would soon be taught that no
generation can bind another. He felt t
no political fabric could be well made w
out some such order of things as mi
through a series of time, afford a ratic
hope of securing unity, coherence, cons
ency, and stability to the state. He
that nothing else can protect it against
levity of courts, and the greater levity of
multitude. That to talk of hereditary m
archy without anything else of heredi
reverence in the commonwealth, was a
minded absurdity.—*Letter to a Noble L*

It is true that the peers have a gre
fluence in the kingdom, and in every p
the public concerns. While they ar
of property, it is impossible to prev
except by such means as must prev
property from its natural operation: a
not easily to be compassed while pr
power; nor by any means to be

while the least notion exists of the method by which the spirit of liberty acts, and of the means by which it is preserved.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

This Violent Cry against the Nobility a Mere Work of Art.

All this violent cry against the nobility I take to be a mere work of art. To be honoured and even privileged by the laws, opinions, and inveterate usages of our country, growing out of the prejudice of ages, has nothing to provoke horror and indignation in any man. Even to be too tenacious of those privileges is not absolutely a crime. The strong struggle in every individual to preserve possession of what he has found to belong to him, and to distinguish him, is one of the securities against injustice and despotism implanted in our nature. It operates as an instinct to secure property, and to preserve communities in a settled state. What is there to shock in this?

Nobility is a graceful ornament to the civil order. It is the Corinthian capital of polished society. *Omnes boni nobilitati semper favemus*, was the saying of a wise and good man. It is indeed one sign of a liberal and benevolent mind to incline to it with some sort of partial propensity. He feels no ennobling principle in his own heart, who wishes to level all the artificial institutions which have been adopted for giving a body to opinion, and permanence to fugitive esteem. It is a sour, malignant, envious disposition, without taste for the reality, or for any image or representation of virtue, that sees with joy the unmerited fall of what had long flourished in splendour and in honour. I do not like to see anything destroyed; any void produced in society; any ruin on the face of the land.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

THE ABOLITION OF CLASSES AND ORDERS IN A STATE PAVES THE WAY FOR A DESPOTISM.

It is true, however, that every such classification, if properly ordered, is good in all forms of government; and composes a strong barrier against the excesses of despotism, as well as it is the necessary means of giving effect and permanence to a republic. For want of something of this kind, if the present project of a republic should fail, all securities to a moderated freedom fail along with it; all the indirect restraints which mitigate despotism are removed; insomuch that if monarchy should ever again obtain an entire ascendency in France, under this or under any other dynasty, it will probably be, if not voluntarily tempered, at setting out, by the wise and virtuous counsels of the prince, the most completely arbitrary power that has ever appeared on earth. This is to play a most desperate game.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Landed Property the Firm Base of every Stable Government.

That description of property is in its nature the firm base of every stable government; and has been so considered by all the wisest writers of the old philosophy, from the time of the Stagyrite, who observes that the agricultural class of all others is the least inclined to sedition. We find it to have been so regarded, in the practical politics of antiquity, where they are brought more directly home to our understandings and bosoms in the history of Rome, and above all, in the writings of Cicero. The country tribes were always thought more respectable than those of the city. And if in our own history there is any one circumstance to which, under God, are to be attributed the steady resistance, the fortunate issue, and sober settlement of all our struggles for liberty, it is, that while the landed interest, instead of forming a separate body, as in

other countries, has, at all times, been in close connection and union with the other great interests of the country, it has been spontaneously allowed to lead, and direct, and moderate all the rest.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

PRESCRIPTION THE MOST SOLID OF TITLES.

Prescription is the most solid of all titles, not only to property, but, which is to secure that property, to government. They harmonise with each other, and give mutual aid to one another. It is accompanied with another ground of authority in the constitution of the human mind, presumption. It is a presumption in favour of any settled scheme of government, against any untried project, that a nation has long existed and flourished under it. It is a better presumption even of the *choice* of a nation, far better than any sudden and temporary arrangement by actual election. Because a nation is not an idea only of local extent, and individual

momentary aggregation, but it is an idea of continuity, which extends in time as well as in numbers and in space. And this is a choice not of one day, or one set of people, not a tumultuary and giddy choice; it is a deliberate election of ages and of generations; it is a constitution made by what is ten thousand times better than choice, it is made by the peculiar circumstances, occasions, tempers, dispositions, and moral, civil, and social habitudes of the people, which disclose themselves only in a long space of time. It is a vestment which accommodates itself to the body. Nor is prescription of government formed upon blind, unmeaning prejudices—for man is a most unwise, and a most wise being. The individual is foolish. The multitude, for the moment, is foolish when they act without deliberation; but the species is wise, and when time is given to it, as a species, it almost always acts right.—*Speech on Ref. of Representation.*

PROPERTY OUGHT TO BE ADEQUATELY REPRESENTED.

Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a state that does not represent its ability as well as its property. But as ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is sluggish, inert, and timid, it never can be safe from the invasions of ability unless it be, out of all proportion, predominant in the representation. It must be represented too in great masses of accumulation, or it is not rightly protected.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

By admitting settled, permanent substance in lieu of numbers, you would avoid the great danger of our time, that of setting up number against property. The numbers ought never to be neglected, because (besides what is due to them as men) collectively, though not individually, they have great property: they ought to have therefore

protection: they ought to have security: they ought to have even consideration: but they ought not to predominate.—*Letter to Sir H. Langrishe.*

Too much and too little are treason against property.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

That Power goes with Property not universally true.

The world of contingency and political combination is much larger than we are apt to imagine. We never can say what may or may not happen without a view to all the actual circumstances. Experience, upon other data than those, is of all things the most delusive. Prudence in new cases can do nothing on grounds of retrospect. A constant vigilance and attention to the train of things as they successively emerge, and to act on what they direct, are the only sure courses. The physician that let blood, and by blood-letting cured one kind of plague,

in the next added to its ravages. That power goes with property is not universally true, and the idea that the operation of it is certain and invariable may mislead us very fatally.—*Thoughts on French Affairs.*

MEN OF RANK AND PROPERTY WILL SOMETIMES LEAGUE THEMSELVES WITH REVOLUTIONISTS.

But riches do not in all cases secure even an inert and passive resistance. There are always, in that description, men whose fortunes, when their minds are once vitiated by passion or by evil principle, are by no means a security from their actually taking their part against the public tranquillity.

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The game of ambition or resentment will be played by many of the rich and great as desperately, and with as much blindness to the consequences, as any other game.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

There is also a time of insecurity, when

interests of all sorts become objects of speculation. Then it is that their very attachment to wealth and importance will induce several persons of opulence to list themselves, and even to take a lead, with the party which they think most likely to prevail, in order to obtain to themselves consideration in some new order or disorder of things. They may be led to act in this manner, that they may secure some portion of their own property; and perhaps to become partakers of the spoil of their own order. Those who speculate on change, always make a great number among people of rank and fortune, as well as amongst the low and the indigent. —*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

Turbulent, discontented men of quality, in proportion as they are puffed up with personal pride and arrogance, generally despise their own order. One of the first symptoms they discover of a selfish and mischievous ambition, is a profligate disregard

of a dignity which they partake with others. —*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Church and State.

First, I beg leave to speak of our Church Establishment, which is the first of our prejudices, not a prejudice destitute of reason, but involving in it profound and extensive wisdom. I speak of it first. It is first and last and midst in our minds. For, taking ground on that religious system of which we are now in possession, we continue to act on the early-received and uniformly-continued sense of mankind. That sense not only, like a wise architect, hath built up the august fabric of states, but like a provident proprietor, to preserve the structure from profanation and ruin, as a sacred temple purged from all the impurities of fraud, and violence, and injustice, and tyranny, hath solemnly and for ever consecrated the commonwealth, and all that officiate in it. This consecration is made that all who administer in the govern-

ment of men, in which they stand in th person of God Himself, should have high an worthy notions of their function and destina tion; that their hope should be full of immortality; that they should not look to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar, but to a solid, permanent existence, in the permanent part of their nature, and to a permanent fame and glory, in the example they leave as a rich inheritance to the world.

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The consecration of the state, by a state religious establishment, is necessary also to operate with a wholesome awe upon free citizens; because, in order to secure their freedom, they must enjoy some determinate portion of power.

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All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust; nd that they are to account for their conduct

in that trust to the one great Master, Author, and Founder of society.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Church and the Constitution will fall together.

If ever the Church and the constitution of England should fall in these islands (and they will fall together), it is not Presbyterian discipline nor Popish hierarchy that will rise upon their ruins. It will not be the Church of Rome, nor the Church of Scotland—nor the Church of Luther, nor the Church of Calvin. On the contrary, all these churches are menaced, and menaced alike. It is the new fanatical religion, now in the heat of its first ferment, of the Rights of Man, which rejects all establishments, all discipline, all ecclesiastical, and in truth all civil order, which will triumph, and which will lay prostrate your church; which will destroy your distinctions, and which will put all your property to auction, and disperse you over

the earth. If the present establishm should fall, it is this religion which triumph in Ireland and in England, as it triumphed in France. This religion wh laughs at creeds, and dogmas, and con sions of faith, may be fomented equa amongst all descriptions and all sec amongst nominal Catholics and amon nominal churchmen; and amongst th dissenters who know little, and care about a presbytery, or any of its discipl or any of its doctrine.

Against this new, this growing, this terminatory system, all these churches h a common concern to defend themsel How the enthusiasts of this rising s rejoice to see you of the old churches p their game, and stir and rake the cinders animosities sunk in their ashes, in order keep up the execution of their plan for y common ruin!—*Letter to R. Burke.*

Honourable gentlemen would have

fight this confederacy of the powers of darkness with the single arm of the Church of England.

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Strong as we are, we are not equal to this. The cause of the Church of England is included in that of religion, not that of religion in the Church of England.—*Speech on Relief of Protestant Dissenters.*

The Church has the Right and Capacity to alter its Laws and Doctrines.

The Church, like every body corporate, may alter her laws without changing her identity. As an independent church, professing fallibility, she has claimed a right of acting without the consent of any other; as a church, she claims, and has always exercised, a right of reforming whatever appeared amiss in her doctrine, her discipline, or her rites. She did so when she shook off the papal supremacy in the reign of Henry the Eighth, which was an act of the body of the English

Church, as well as of the state (I don't inquire how obtained). She did so when she twice changed the liturgy in the reign of King Edward, when she then established articles which were themselves a variation from former professions. She did so when she cut off three articles from her original forty-two, and reduced them to the present thirty-nine; and she certainly would not lose her corporate identity, nor subvert her fundamental principles, though she were to leave ten of the thirty-nine which remain out of any future confession of her faith. She would limit her corporate powers, on the contrary, and she would oppose her fundamental principles, if she were to deny herself the prudential exercise of such capacity of reformation.—*Speech on Acts of Uniformity.*

Considerations which should weigh with those who would alter the Constitution.

At once to preserve and to reform is quite

another thing. When the useful parts of an old establishment are kept, and what is superadded is to be fitted to what is retained, a vigorous mind, steady, persevering attention, various powers of comparison and combination, and the resources of an understanding fruitful in expedients, are to be exercised; they are to be exercised in a continued conflict with the combined force of opposite vices, with the obstinacy that rejects all improvement, and the levity that is fatigued and disgusted with everything of which it is in possession. But you may object—"A process of this kind is slow. It is not fit for an assembly which glories in performing in a few months the work of ages. Such a mode of reforming, possibly, might take up many years." Without question it might; and it ought. It is one of the excellencies of a method in which time is amongst the assistants, that its operation is slow, and in some cases almost imperceptible. If circumspection and caution are a part of wisdom when

we work only upon inanimate matter, surely they become a part of duty too when the subject of our demolition and construction is not brick and timber, but sentient beings, by the sudden alteration of whose state, condition, and habits, multitudes may be rendered miserable. But it seems as if it were the prevalent opinion in Paris, that an unfeeling heart and an undoubting confidence, are the sole qualifications for a perfect legislator. Far different are my ideas of that high office. The true lawgiver ought to have a heart full of sensibility. He ought to love and respect his kind, and to fear himself. It may be allowed to his temperament to catch his ultimate object with an intuitive glance; but his movements towards it ought to be deliberate. Political arrangement, as it is a work for social ends, is to be only wrought by social means. There mind must conspire with mind. Time is required to produce that union of minds which alone can produce all the good we aim at. Our patience

will achieve more than our force.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Danger of encouraging Discontent with the Government and Constitution.

Great discontents frequently arise in the best constituted governments, from causes which no human wisdom can foresee, and no human power can prevent. They occur at uncertain periods, but at periods which are not commonly far asunder. Governments of all kinds are administered only by men; and great mistakes, tending to inflame these discontents, may concur. The indecision of those who happen to rule at the critical time, their supine neglect, or their precipitate and ill-judged attention, may aggravate the public misfortunes. In such a state of things the principles, now only sown, will shoot out and vegetate in full luxuriance. In such circumstances the minds of the people become sore and ulcerated.

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Mistaking malignity for sagacity, they are soon led to cast off all hope from a good administration of affairs, and come to think that all reformation depends, not on the change of actors, but upon an alteration in the machinery. Then will be felt the full effect of encouraging doctrines which tend to make the citizens despise their constitution.

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Then will be felt, in all its aggravation, the pernicious consequence of destroying all docility in the minds of those who are not formed for finding their own way in the labyrinths of political theory, and are made to reject the clue and to disdain the guide. Then will be felt, and too late will be acknowledged, the ruin which follows the disjoining of religion from the state; the separation of morality from policy; and the giving conscience no concern and no coactive or coercive force in the most material of all the social ties, the principle of our obligations to government.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

I am not of the opinion of those gentlemen who are against disturbing the public repose; I like a clamour whenever there is an abuse. The fire-bell at midnight disturbs your sleep, but it keeps you from being burned in your bed. The hue and cry alarms the county, but it preserves all the property of the province. All these clamours aim at *redress*. But a clamour made merely for the purpose of rendering the people discontented with their situation, without an endeavour to give them a practical remedy, is indeed one of the worst acts of sedition.—*On Prosecut. for Libels.*

Danger of making a Material Change in the Constitution.

Has he well considered what an immense operation any change in our constitution is? How many discussions, parties, and passions it will necessarily excite; and, when you open it to inquiry in one part, where the inquiry will stop?—*Obser. on Pres. State of Nation.*

Our constitution stands on a nice equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it. In removing it from a dangerous leaning towards one side, there may be a risk of oversetting it on the other. Every project of a material change in a government so complicated as ours, combined at the same time with external circumstances, still more complicated, is a matter full of difficulties: in which a considerate man will not be too ready to decide; a prudent man too ready to undertake; or an honest man too ready to promise.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Men little think how immorally they act in rashly meddling with what they do not understand. Their delusive good intention is no sort of excuse for their presumption. They who truly mean well must be fearful of acting ill.

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A constitution on sufferance is a constitu-

tion condemned. Sentence is already passed upon it. The execution is only delayed.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

The old building stands well enough, though part Gothic, part Grecian, and part Chinese, until an attempt is made to square it into uniformity. Then it may come down upon our heads altogether, in much uniformity of ruin; and great will be the fall thereof.—*Obser. on Pres. State of Nation.*

It is an obvious truth that no constitution can defend itself: it must be defended by the wisdom and fortitude of men. These are what no constitution can give: they are the gifts of God; and He alone knows whether we shall possess such gifts at the time when we stand in need of them.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

A STATE WITHOUT THE MEANS OF SOME CHANGE IS WITHOUT THE MEANS OF ITS CONSERVATION.

I will not deny that our constitution may

have faults, and that those faults, when found, ought to be corrected; but, on the whole, that constitution has been our own pride, and an object of admiration to all other nations. It is not everything, which appears at first view to be faulty in such a complicated plan that is to be determined to be so in reality. To enable us to correct the constitution, the whole constitution must be viewed together; and it must be compared with the actual state of the people and the circumstances of the time. For that which, taken singly and by itself, may appear to be wrong, when considered with relation to other things may be perfectly right; or at least such as ought to be patiently endured, as the means of preventing something that is worse.—*Letter on Dur. of Parliaments.*

As long as the solid and well-disposed forms of this constitution remain, there ever is within Parliament itself a power of renovat-

ing its principles and effecting a self-reformation, which no other plan of government has ever contained. This constitution has therefore admitted innumerable improvements, either for the correction of the original scheme, or for removing corruptions, or for bringing its principles better to suit those changes which have successively happened in the circumstances of the nation, or in the manners of the people.

We feel that the growth of the colonies is such a change of circumstances, and that our present dispute is an exigency as pressing as any, which ever demanded a revision of our government. Public troubles have often called upon this country to look into its constitution. It has ever been bettered by such a revision. If our happy and luxuriant increase of dominion and our diffused population have outgrown the limits of a constitution made for a contracted object, we ought to bless God, who has furnished us with this noble occasion for displaying our skill and

beneficence in enlarging the scale of rational happiness, and of making the politic generosity of this kingdom as extensive as its fortune.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

A Marked Distinction between Change and Reformation.

I knew that there is a manifest, marked distinction, which ill men with ill designs, or weak men incapable of any design, will constantly be confounding—that is, a marked distinction between change and reformation. The former alters the substance of the objects themselves, and gets rid of all their essential good, as well as of all the accidental evil annexed to them. Change is novelty; and whether it is to operate any one of the effects of reformation at all, or whether it may not contradict the very principle upon which reformation is desired, cannot be certainly known beforehand. Reform is not a change in the substance or in the primary modification of the object, but a direct appli-

cation of a remedy to the grievance complained of.—*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

Reform with Equity.

I told you, sir, when I promised before the holidays to bring in this plan, that I never would suffer any man, or description of men, to suffer from errors that naturally have grown out of the abusive constitution of those offices which I propose to regulate. If I cannot reform with equity, I will not reform at all.—*Speech on Econom. Reform.*

Those who are quick to perceive Faults and Defects make not Good Reformers.

It is undoubtedly true, though it may seem paradoxical; but in general, those who are habitually employed in finding and displaying faults are unqualified for the work of reformation, because their minds are not only unfurnished with patterns of the fair and good, but by habit they come to take no delight in the contemplation of those things.

By hating vices too much they come to love men too little. It is therefore not wonderful that they should be indisposed and unable to serve them. From hence arises the complexional disposition of some of your guides to pull everything in pieces.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Something they must destroy, or they seem to themselves to exist for no purpose. —*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Advantages of a Slow and Gradual Progress.

By a slow but well-sustained progress the effect of each step is watched; the good or ill success of the first gives light to us in the second; and so, from light to light, we are conducted with safety through the whole series. We see that the parts or the system do not clash. The evils latent in the most promising contrivances are provided for as they arise. One advantage is as little as

possible sacrificed to another. We compensate, we reconcile, we balance. We are enabled to unite into a consistent whole the various anomalies and contending principles that are found in the minds and affairs of men. From hence arises, not an excellence in simplicity, but one far superior, an excellence in composition.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

We must all obey the great law of change. It is the most powerful law of nature, and the means perhaps of its conservation. All we can do, and that human wisdom can do, is to provide that the change shall proceed by insensible degrees. This has all the benefits which may be in change without any of the inconveniences of mutation.—*Thoughts on French Affairs.*

The Wisdom of Timely Reforms.

I do most seriously put it to administration to consider the wisdom of a timely

reform. Early reformations are amicable arrangements with a friend in power; late reformations are terms imposed upon a conquered enemy: early reformations are made in cool blood; late reformations are made under a state of inflammation. In that state of things the people behold in government nothing that is respectable. They see the abuse, and they will see nothing else; they fall into the temper of a furious populace provoked at the disorder of a house of ill fame; they never attempt to correct or regulate; they go to work by the shortest way; they abate the nuisance, they pull down the house.—*Speech on Econom. Reform.*

The Evils of Crude and Immoderate Reforms.

But as it is the interest of government that reformation should be early, it is the interest of the people that it should be temperate. It is their interest, because a tem-

perate reform is permanent, and because it has a principle of growth. Whenever we improve, it is right to leave room for a further improvement. It is right to consider, to look about us, to examine the effect of what we have done. Then we can proceed with confidence, because we can proceed with intelligence. Whereas in hot reformations, in what men, more zealous than considerate, call *making clear work*, the whole is generally so crude, so harsh, so indigested; mixed with so much imprudence, and so much injustice; so contrary to the whole course of human nature, and human institutions, that the very people who are most eager for it are among the first to grow disgusted at what they have done.—*Speech on Econom. Reform.*

THE TRUE CRITERION OF A WISE GOVERNMENT.

If there is any one eminent criterion which, above all the rest, distinguishes a wise government from an administration

weak and improvident, it is this: "Well to know the best time and manner of yielding what it is impossible to keep." There have been, sir, and there are, many who choose to chicane with their situation rather than be instructed by it. Those gentlemen argue against every desire of reformation, upon the principles of a criminal prosecution. It is enough for them to justify their adherence to a pernicious system that it is not of their contrivance; that it is an inheritance of absurdity derived to them from their ancestors; that they can make out a long and unbroken pedigree of mismanagers that have gone before them.—*Speech on Econom. Reform.*

Obstructors and Advocates of Reform.

We all know that those who loll at their ease in high dignities, whether of the Church or of the State, are commonly averse to all reformation. It is hard to persuade them that there can be anything amiss in estab-

lishments which by feeling experience they find to be so very comfortable. It is as true, that from the same selfish motives, those who are struggling upwards are apt to find everything wrong and out of order. These are truths upon one side and on the other; and neither on the one side or the other, in argument, are they worth a single farthing.—*Speech on Acts of Uniformity.*

Wise Men will apply their Remedies to the Permanent Causes of Evil.

Wise men will apply their remedies to vices, not to names; to the causes of evil which are permanent, not to the occasional organs by which they act, and the transitory modes in which they appear. Otherwise you will be wise historically, a fool in practice. Seldom have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive. Whilst you are discussing fashion the fashion is gone by. The very same vice

assumes a new body. The spirit transmigrates; and, far from losing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new organs with the fresh vigour of a juvenile activity.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

The Patriots and Republicans of Old.

Novelty is not the only source of zeal. Why should not a Maccabeus and his brethren arise to assert the honour of the ancient law, and to defend the temple of their forefathers, with as ardent a spirit as can inspire any innovator to destroy the monuments of the piety and the glory of ancient ages? It is not a hazarded assertion, it is a great truth, that when once things are gone out of their ordinary course, it is by acts out of the ordinary course they can alone be re-established. Republican spirit can only be combated by a spirit of the same nature;

the same nature, but informed with
ther principle, and pointing to another

I would persuade a resistance both to corruption and to the reformation that ails. It will not be the weaker, but ı the stronger, for combating both to-er. A victory over real corruptions d enable us to baffle the spurious and ɜnded reformations. I would not wish xcite, or even to tolerate, that kind of spirit which invokes the powers of hell ɜctify the disorders of the earth. No! I ld add my voice with better, and, I trust, e potent charms, to draw down justice, wisdom, and fortitude from heaven, for correction of human vice, and the recall- of human error from the devious ways ɔ which it has been betrayed. I would ih to call the impulses of individuals at ce to the aid and to the control of au-ority. By this which I call the true repub-tan spirit, paradoxical as it may appear, monarchies alone can be rescued from the imbecility of courts and the madness of the ɔowd. This republican spirit would not

suffer men in high place to bring ruin on their country and on themselves. It would reform, not by destroying, but by saving, the great, the rich, and the powerful. Such a republican spirit, we perhaps fondly conceive to have animated the distinguished heroes and patriots of old, who knew no mode of policy but religion and virtue. These they would have paramount to all constitutions; they would not suffer monarchs, or senates, or popular assemblies, under pretences of dignity, or authority, or freedom, to shake off those moral riders which reason has appointed to govern every sort of rude power.—*Letter to W. Eliot.*

Reformation not always pleasing even to Reformers.

Nothing, you know, is more common than for men to wish, and call loudly too for a reformation, who, when it arrives, do by no means like the severity of its aspect. Reformation is one of those pieces which

must be put at some distance in order to please. Its greatest favourers love it better in the abstract than in the substance. When any old prejudice of their own, or any interest that they value, is touched, they become scrupulous, they become captious, and every man has his separate exception.—*Speech on Econom. Reform.*

WHEN A GREAT CHANGE IS TO BE MADE ALL THINGS WILL BEAR WITNESS TO ITS NECESSITY.

If a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it, the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope, will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself than the mere designs of men.—*Thoughts on French Affairs.*

A BLIND SPIRIT OF INNOVATION THE GREATEST OF EVILS.

Let those who have the trust of political

or of natural authority ever keep watch against the desperate enterprises of innovation; let even their benevolence be fortified and armed. — *Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

I wished to warn the people against the greatest of all evils—a blind and furious spirit of innovation, under the name of reform. I was indeed well aware that power rarely reforms itself. So it is undoubtedly when all is quiet about it. But I was in hopes that provident fear might prevent fruitless penitence. I trusted that danger might produce at least circumspection; I flattered myself, in a moment like this, that nothing would be added to make authority top-heavy; that the very moment of an earthquake would not be the time chosen for adding a story to our houses. I hoped to see the surest of all reforms, perhaps the only sure reform, the ceasing to do ill. In the meantime I wished to the people the

isdom of knowing how to tolerate a condi-
on which none of their efforts can render
uch more than tolerable. It was a condition,
owever, in which everything was to be found
hat could enable them to live to nature,
nd, if so they pleased, to live to virtue and
o honour.—*Letter to W. Eliot.*

To Innovate is not to Reform.

It cannot at this time be too often re-
peated, line upon line, precept upon precept,
until it comes into the currency of a proverb,
*To innovate is not to reform.—Letter to a
Noble Lord.*

They are always considering the formal
distributions of power in a constitution; the
oral basis they consider as nothing. Very
ifferent is my opinion: I consider the moral
asis as everything; the formal arrange-
ents, further than as they promote the
oral principles of government, and the
eping desperately wicked persons as the

subjects of laws and not the mak
to be of little importance. Wh
the cutting and shuffling of card
pack still remains the same?—*F*
on Reg. Peace.

A Revolution the Last Resour
Thinking and the Goo

The speculative line of d
where obedience ought to end an
must begin, is faint, obscure, and
definable. It is not a single act
event which determines it. G
must be abused and deranged, in
it can be thought of; and the
the future must be as bad as the
of the past.

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Times and occasions and p
will teach their own lessons. T
determine from the gravity of th
irritable from sensibility to oppr
high-minded from disdain and in

abusive power in unworthy hands; the brave and bold from the love of honourable danger in a generous cause; but, with or without right, a revolution will be the very last resource of the thinking and the good.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

PERSONAL.

I am accused, I am told abroad, of being a man of aristocratic principles. If by aristocracy they mean the peers, I have no vulgar admiration nor any vulgar antipathy towards them; I hold their order in cold and decent respect. I hold them to be of an absolute necessity in the constitution; but I think they are only good when kept within their proper bounds. I trust, whenever there has been a dispute between these Houses, the part I have taken has not been equivocal. If by the aristocracy, which indeed comes nearer to the point, they mean an adherence to the rich and powerful against the poor and weak, this would indeed be a

very extraordinary part. I have incurred the odium of gentlemen in this House for not paying sufficient regard to men of ample property. When, indeed, the smallest rights of the poorest people in the kingdom are in question, I would set my face against any act of pride and power countenanced by the highest that are in it ; and if it should come to the last extremity, and to a contest of blood, God forbid ! God forbid !—my part is taken ; I would take my fate with the poor, and low and feeble. But if these people came to turn their liberty into a cloak for maliciousness, and to seek a privilege of exemption, not from power, but from the rules of morality and virtuous discipline, then I would join my hand to make them feel the force which a few, united in a good cause, have over a multitude of the profligate and ferocious.—*Speech on Marriage Act.*

He told the House, upon an important occasion and pretty early in his service, that

"being warned by the ill effect of a contrary procedure in great examples, he had taken his ideas of liberty very low; in order that they should stick to him, and that he might stick to them to the end of his life."—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

I pass to the next head of charge, Mr. Burke's inconsistency. It is certainly a great aggravation of his fault in embracing false opinions, that in doing so he is not supposed to fill up a void, but that he is guilty of a dereliction of opinions that are true and laudable. This is the great gist of the charge against him. It is not so much that he is wrong in his book (that, however, is alleged also), as that he has therein belied his whole life. I believe, if he could venture to value himself upon anything, it is on the virtue of consistency that he would value himself the most. Strip him of this, and you leave him naked indeed.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

The charges against me are all of one kind, that I have pushed the principles of general justice and benevolence too far; further than a cautious policy would warrant; and further than the opinions of many would go along with me.—In every accident which may happen through life, in pain, in sorrow, in depression, and distress—I will call to mind this accusation; and be comforted.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

Gentlemen, I have had my day. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude to you for having set me in a place, wherein I could lend the slightest help to great and laudable designs. If I have had my share in any measure giving quiet to private property and private conscience; if by my vote I have aided in securing to families the best possession—peace; if I have joined in reconciling kings to their subjects, and subjects to their prince; if I have assisted to loosen the foreign holdings of the citizen, and taught

him to look for his protection to the laws of his country, and for his comfort to the good-will of his countrymen ;—if I have thus taken my part with the best of men in the best of their actions, I can shut the book ; I might wish to read a page or two more, but this is enough for my measure. I have not lived in vain.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

THOUGHTS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS

If we do not take to our aid the foregone studies of men reputed intelligent and learned, we shall be always beginners.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

We seem to be approaching to a great crisis in our affairs, which calls for the whole wisdom of the wisest among us, without being able to assure ourselves that any wisdom can preserve us from many and great inconveniencies.—*Speech on Arr. at Bristol.*

It looks to me to be narrow and pedantic to apply the ordinary ideas of criminal justice to this great public contest. I do not know

the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

There are critical moments in the fortune of all states, when they who are too weak to contribute to your prosperity, may be strong enough to complete your ruin. *Spoliatis arma supersunt.* — *Speech on Concil. with America.*

Bodies tied together by so unnatural a bond of union as mutual hatred, are only connected to their ruin.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

By doing this, without the least impairing of our strength, we add to the credit of our moderation, which, in itself, is always strength more or less.—*Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

A state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Let me add, that the great inlet by which a colour for oppression has entered into the world, is by one man's pretending to determine concerning the happiness of another, and by claiming a right to use what means he thinks proper in order to bring him to a sense of it. It is the ordinary and trite sophism of oppression.—*Tracts on Popery Laws.*

The conduct of a losing party never appears right; at least it never can possess the only infallible criterion of wisdom to vulgar judgments—success.—*Letter to Memb. of Nat. Assembly.*

But the most favourable laws can do very little towards the happiness of a people, when the disposition of the ruling power is adverse to them. Men do not live upon blotted paper. The favourable or the hostile mind of the ruling power is of far more importance to mankind, for good or evil, than the black letter of any statute.—*Letter on Affairs of Ireland.*

The people of England were then, as they are now, called upon to make government strong. They thought it a great deal better to make it wise and honest. — *Letter to Sheriffs of Bristol.*

It is of the utmost moment not to make mistakes in the use of strong measures; and firmness is then only a virtue when it accompanies the most perfect wisdom. In truth, inconstancy is a sort of natural corrective of folly and ignorance.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Every good political institution must have a preventive operation as well as a remedial. It ought to have a natural tendency to exclude bad men from government, and not to trust for the safety of the state to subsequent punishment alone.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Religion, always a principle of energy. —*Speech on Concil. with America.*

For there is a sort of presumption against novelty, drawn out of a deep consideration of human nature and human affairs; and the maxim of jurisprudence is well laid down, *Vetustas pro lege semper habetur.* — *First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

I believe the instances are exceedingly rare of men immediately passing over a clear, marked line of virtue into declared vice and corruption. There are a sort of middle tints and shades between the two extremes; there is something uncertain on the confines of the two empires which they first pass through, and which renders the change easy and imperceptible. There are even a sort of splendid impositions so well contrived that, at the very time the path of rectitude is quitted for ever, men seem to be advancing into some higher and nobler road of public conduct.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

But among vices, there is none which the

House abhors in the same degree with *obstinacy*. Obstinacy, sir, is certainly a great vice; and in the changeful state of political affairs it is frequently the cause of great mischief. It happens, however, very unfortunately, that almost the whole line of the great and masculine virtues—constancy, gravity, magnanimity, fortitude, fidelity, and firmness—are closely allied to this disagreeable quality, of which you have so just an abhorrence; and in their excess, all these virtues very easily fall into it.—*Two Letters to Gentlemen at Bristol.*

In a small degree, and conversant in little things, vanity is of little moment. When full grown, it is the worst of vices, and the occasional mimic of them all. It makes the whole man false. It leaves nothing sincere or trustworthy about him. His best qualities are poisoned and perverted by it, and operate exactly as the worst.—*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

You know that cheats and deceivers never can repent. The fraudulent have no resource but in fraud. They have no other goods in their magazine. They have no virtue or wisdom in their minds, to which, in a disappointment concerning the profitable effects of fraud and cunning, they can retreat. —*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

It is an instinct; and under the direction of reason, instinct is always in the right. —*Letter to a Noble Lord.*

All Protestantism, even the most cold and passive, is a sort of dissent. But the religion most prevalent in our northern colonies is a refinement on the principle of resistance; it is the dissidence of dissent; and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

Great distress has never hitherto taught, and whilst the world lasts it never will teach, wise lessons to any part of mankind. Men

are as much blinded by the extremes of misery as by the extremes of prosperity.—*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

Impeachment, that great guardian of the purity of the constitution.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

The ignorance of the people is a bottom but for a temporary system; the interest of active men in the state is a foundation perpetual and infallible.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

Personal liberty, the most lively of these feelings and the most important of these interests, which in other European countries has rather arisen from the system of manners and the habitudes of life, than from the laws of the state, (in which it flourished more from neglect than attention,) in England, has been a direct object of government.—*Second Letter on Reg. Peace.*

A very great part of the mischiefs that vex the world arises from words. People soon forget the meaning, but the impression and the passion remain.—*Letter to R. Burke.*

The degree of estimation in which any profession is held, becomes the standard of the estimation in which the professors hold themselves.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Wisdom cannot create materials, they are the gifts of nature or of chance; her pride is in the use.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

And is then example nothing? It is everything. Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Whilst freedom is true to itself, everything becomes subject to it; and its very adversaries are an instrument in its hands. —*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

It is laid in the unalterable constitution of things:—None can aspire to act greatly, but those who are of force greatly to suffer. —*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

That state which is resolved to hazard its existence rather than to abandon its objects, must have an infinite advantage over that which is resolved to yield rather than to carry its resistance beyond a certain point. Humanly speaking, that people, which bounds its efforts only with its being, must give the law to that nation which will not push its opposition beyond its convenience.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Interested timidity disgraces as much in the cabinet, as personal timidity does in the field. But timidity, with regard to the well-being of our country, is heroic virtue.—*Speech on Amer. Taxation.*

Ignorance is impotence; narrowness of mind is impotence; timidity is itself impotence, and makes all other qualities that go

along with it impotent and useless.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

It is a remark, liable to as few exceptions as any generality can be, that they who applaud prosperous folly, and adore triumphant guilt, have never been known to succour or even to pity human weakness or offence when they become subject to human vicissitude, and meet with punishment instead of obtaining power.—*Appeal from New to Old Whigs.*

There are cases in which a man would be ashamed not to have been imposed on. There is a confidence necessary to human intercourse, and without which men are often more injured by their own suspicions than they would be by the perfidy of others. —*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

Men sometimes make a point of honour not to be disabused; and they had rather fall into a hundred errors than confess one. —*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

The haughtiness by which the proud repel us has this of good in it; that in making us keep our distance, they must keep their distance too.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Indeed it is a law of nature, that whoever is necessary to what we have made our object, is sure, in some way, or in some time or other, to become our master.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

The motive which solely influences every man's hopes must come in time to govern every man's conduct.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

All men that are ruined, are ruined on the side of their natural propensities. There they are unguarded. Above all, good men do not suspect that their destruction is attempted through their virtues.—*First Letter on Reg. Peace.*

Reason is never inconvenient but when it

comes to be applied. Mere general truths interfere very little with the passions. They can, until they are roused by a troublesome application, rest in great tranquillity, side by side, with tempers and proceedings the most directly opposite to them. Men want to be reminded who do not want to be taught: because those original ideas of rectitude, to which the mind is compelled to assent when they are proposed, are not always as present to it as they ought to be.—*Tracts on Popery Laws.*

It is by bribing, not so often by being bribed, that wicked politicians bring ruin on mankind.—*Obser. on Pres. State of Nation.*

They never will love where they ought to love, who do not hate where they ought to hate.—*Obser. on Pres. State of Nation.*

Taste and elegance, though they are reckoned only among the smaller and secondary morals, yet are of no mean

importance in the regulation of life. A moral taste is not of force to turn vice into virtue; but it recommends virtue with something like the blandishments of pleasure; and it infinitely abates the evils of vice. —*Letter to Member of Nat. Assembly.*

Most men, especially great men, do not always know their well-wishers.—*Thoughts on Pres. Discontents.*

There never was a mean and abject mind that did not admire an intrepid and dexterous villain.—*Remarks on Policy of Allies.*

It is sometimes as hard to persuade slaves to be free, as it is to compel freemen to be slaves.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Crude, unconnected truths, are in the world of practice what falsehoods are in theory.—*Speech on Pet. of Unitarians.*

These are some of the little arts of great statesmen.—*Obser. on Pres. State of Nation.*

Liberty is not only a private blessing of the first order, but the vital spring and energy of the state itself, which has just so much life and vigour as there is liberty in it. —*Two Letters to Gentlemen at Bristol.*

On every country the first creditor is the plough.—*Speech at Guildhall, Bristol.*

In every arduous enterprise, we consider what we are to lose, as well as what we are to gain; and the more and better stake of liberty every people possess, the less they will hazard in a vain attempt to make it more. These are *the cords of man.* Man acts from adequate motives relative to his interest, and not on metaphysical speculations.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

I do not hesitate to say, that the road to eminence and power, from obscure condition, ought not to be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course. If rare merit be the rarest of all rare things, it ought to pass

through some sort of probation. The temple of honour ought to be seated on an eminence. If it be opened through virtue, let it be remembered too, that virtue is never tried but by some difficulty and some struggle.—*Reflect. on Rev. in France.*

Above all things, I was resolved not to be guilty of tampering: the odious vice of restless and unstable minds.—*Speech on Concil. with America.*

A man never can have any point of pride that is not pernicious to him.—*Letter to Barry.*

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THE END

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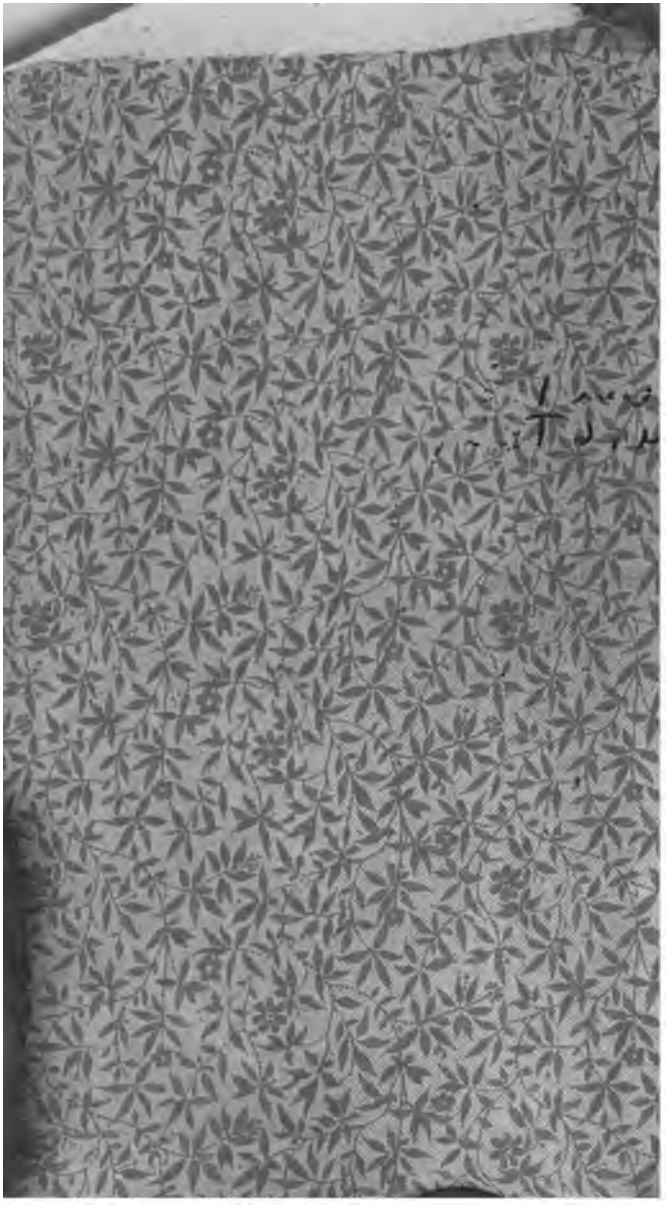
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